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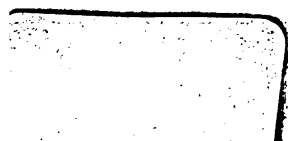
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THE
BLACK WATCH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE DOMINIE'S LEGACY."

My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.
Scots Song.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

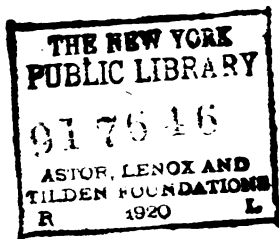
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TO

SIR CHARLES FÖRBES, BART.

&c. &c. &c.

SIR:

IT was the intention of my late father to dedicate to you the following Tale, illustrative of the martial character of the Highlands of Scotland; but death has withheld him from indulging in this wish.

May I, therefore, his son, presume to fulfil the design which my father entertained, and inscribe with your name this, his last, Work?

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

With great respect,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN COXON PICKEN.

THE
BLACK WATCH.

CHAPTER I.

To Nature and to Holy Writ
Alone did God the boy commit :
Where flash'd and roar'd the torrent, oft
His soul found wings, and soar'd aloft!

COLERIDGE.

THE first peep of daylight was just beginning to streak the sky on the seaward side of the old town of Inverness, in the north of Scotland, when a tall Highland youth, dressed in bonnet and trews, stole cautiously forth from the straggling outskirts, and with his face turned southerly, set hastily forward on some boyish adventure. The season of the year was early summer; the time, that discontented and lawless period in Scotland, which occurred between the fifteen and the forty-five; and the lad that now bared his youthful bosom to the breezes of the south, was not quite sixteen years of age.

No sooner had the youth got fairly clear of Inverness, than he ran for several miles, as if he had been chased; never stopping to take breath until he found himself on the border of the long dreary flat called Culloden Moor, which was afterwards to become so famous in the history of his country. As he proceeded forward, clear day having now spread around, the open level that he could see, to a distance behind, showed him that so far there was none in pursuit. When, however, he had reached the farthest edge of the moor, and the hills began to rise to his right in grand and picturesque irregularity, determining to avoid any possible danger, as well as to gratify his longing to enjoy one glorious week

among the glens, he plunged into the outer commencement of the great wilds of Lochaber.

"Liberty! blessed liberty! is this indeed thyself that I have found at last!" he cried, holding out his arms towards the great blue hills, that now stretched away, mountain beyond mountain, and peak beyond peak, to his astonished admiration. "Have I no master now to slave and harass me! no mercenary mistress to stint me of my food? Have I now no morning's anxiety, no evening's terror? Am I really a free being, to run where I please, and seek what I can, in this wide world? Are my feet now fairly on 'the bonny blooming heather?' and can I run, like the red deer, without any one to stop me? Liberty! glorious liberty!" he cried, bounding along the ridge to which he had climbed; "I vow I am almost giddy with the joy of finding thee at last!"

He now mounted to the top of the hill, and sitting himself down on a soft knoll, set himself to consider of his means and prospects. Thrusting his fingers into an opening in the band of his trews, he took out a little leathern purse, and began to reckon his worldly wealth. He had two beautiful silver pennies, the coinage of his former majesty, King George the First—three new farthings, excellently convenient for small change, and not less than six Edinburgh half-pennies, which it became him to husband according to their value. Besides this, he had an Inverness bodle, extremely useful on occasions of economy; and, in addition to all, an old-fashioned Scots plack, which, being twice the value of the former—namely, the third of a penny—made the whole of his money, put together, amount to within a fraction above a white sixpence!—a sum which, if properly managed, would go a great way indeed with an abstemious Scotsman.

But, considering the splendour of the boy's plans, all this might have been deemed insufficient, but for a piece of good fortune, which, above and beyond the former, had put into his hand an actual shilling! with a beautiful king's crown on one side of it; and when he now reflected on the way it had dropped from the clouds upon him, he saw clearly that Providence favoured his present adventure. The very day previous to that on which he now sat at perfect liberty, on the sunny side of a Highland hill, a tall, swaggering Englishman, wearing a great drab coat, and carrying a travelling whip in his hand, had asked him to do him some trifling service; and after staring him in the face, and saying something about its being a pity that he did not go to the south, had thrust

into his hand this noble shilling; and then stumped off as unconcerned as if he had done nothing extraordinary.

There was only one other piece of wealth the lad had, the value of which could not be so correctly ascertained. That was a small old-fashioned gold clasp, which, by much persuasion, he had been enabled to obtain from the woman with whom he had lived from the time he was an infant, until he became apprentice to Daniel M'Vicar. This little personal idol he had always held in the most sacred veneration; for, whenever he took a desponding thought about his orphan condition, it did him good to con over and contemplate its mysterious initials, from some vague notion of hidden philosophy, that it might one day become of service in helping him to a friend.

Having now collected his thoughts, and matured his resolves, he descended the hill with joy; and, stretching forward again down a winding glen, he soon overtook, beside some long patches of green corn, several straggling cottages, that seemed sunning themselves pleasantly in the morning's beams, and there he found a needful, and, to him, delicious refreshment. Darting forward again, wherever his fancy led him, he wandered for days, among scenes and places, whose very wildness, to him, was enchanting, and even whose occasional bald and gruesome sterility seemed to fill his soul with the deep spirit of nature. All the latent romance of his disposition now came out in glowing enthusiasm, as he lingered among the recesses of those glorious wilds, and saw, with his own eyes, how nature had shaped out a retreat for herself, to which she invites none to enter but her chosen children; and thus, with his young and buoyant spirit, he first drank in her profound impressions.

During all this, Hector Monro was at little loss for his simple maintenance; for, whenever he came to a laird's castle on a hill-side, or a lonely sheiling in a glen, the comely appearance and bold spirit of the boy, procured him a hearty and a delighted Highland welcome. There he partook of the barley-bread and milk, or the bit of braxey mutton, of the kindly cottager, and rested at night on the bed of heath made up for him in the corner; and if, on leaving his kind hosts, he offered to open the strings of his little leathern purse, to give a silver penny for his entertainment, the proffer was refused as almost an insult.

Had we to tell the same story now, applying to our own days, a different representation would require to be given of a people, among whom, at that time, simplicity of life brought

a happiness more than they themselves understood; and poverty itself had the sacredness of virtue, accompanied, as it was, by a Doric nobleness that made it almost enviable. Before southern luxury and Lowland greed had found their way among the mountains, to the fatal corrupting of landlord and clansmen—making all men mercenary, and none contented—the more than eastern hospitality of the primitive Highlander was such, as well may excite the astonishment of those whose social sympathies have been improved away, almost into a matter of memory or of history. So common and so genuine was this virtue in those days, among this secluded people, that, at length, advantage was taken of it by idle persons from the south, who, under the name of Sorners, lived from house to house, upon the kind feelings of those who impoverished themselves to give to the travelling wayfarer, until the imposition became so common as to require the check of legal enactment.

Though the people among whom our wanderer lighted seemed often poor “to a degree,” yet experiencing nothing on his way but kindness and respect, when he retired at night to his fragrant bed, often after partaking of every thing that the cottagers had hoarded, and haply having his fancy delighted with those tales and songs of love and heroism which make so powerful an impression upon the youthful fancy—when, as he lay, he contrasted all this with what he had suffered in the house of his master, in Inverness, the tears would rush into the eyes of the grateful youth, and he rejoiced in spirit in a more noble view of human nature.

But here, among these romantic mountains, Hector found that he had, after all, no call to abide; the feeling of independence still obtruding in his thoughts: so, with great reluctance, he descended towards the towns to see what fortune would throw in his way. As he approached the haunts of population and trade, he soon found that the people began to look with longing when he took out his little purse; and that his silver pennies were now but faintly refused. The generosity of his own disposition made him press them whenever they appeared acceptable; and thus his last plack was ultimately paid away, and his white shilling he had a strong reluctance to discount. With the common self-denial of a mountaineer, he had passed a whole day without food, and towards evening came to a river, which it was necessary to cross. Observing a boat fastened to a stake, he was just about to help himself to its assistance, when he saw

a man, carrying a bundle, come leisurely down from a small cottage near the bank.

The man, depositing the bundle in the boat, proceeded to unloose it, and then stepped in himself, taking no notice of Hector, who stood watching by. He was taking up the oars, meaning to cross the river, when seeing the boy making no motion to go on board, he thought fit to address him.

"Will she no be for crossing ta ferry?"

"Then you keep a ferry here?"

"Ay, to be surely—an it's a penny price. Will she go?"

"Will you not let a poor lad get a crossing in your boat, without changing his white shilling?"

"She'll see her nainself's nose made a cheese for ta mice first," said the man, preparing to pull off.

"Then I'll try whether the stream is half as churlish as yourself," said Hector; and without another word, he dashed in clothed as he was, his little bundle held firm in his teeth. Breasting the current like a water-dog, he soon swam past the boat; while it was as much as the astonished ferryman could do to get to the other side of the river at the same moment as the adventurous boy.

"Here's a ruination to her trade," said the man, stepping out of his boat. "Deevil! if she comes here that trick again, by the piper o' Pennycuick, she'll just stick the oar in the back o' her neck afore she's half across, and drown her like a blind puppy."*

* The alarm of the ferryman was quite natural, from the known reluctance or inability of his countrymen of that period, to pay any species of toll or turnpike-money. A Highlander could never be made to understand why a man should be obliged to pay for "ganging on the ground," or for getting dryshod across a river; which was the great objection to the military roads just then cut through the Highlands, under Marshal Wade's direction. Rather than pay so unreasonable a charge, the poorer Scotchwomen made no scruple of exposing their persons in a manner much less excusable than the washing-tub tramping, so well known even in the Lowlands; for a traveller from England, a little before this time, who had penetrated as far north as Inverness, shortly after the bridge over the Murray Frith was built, relates, that he has seen numbers of women, many of them carrying loads on their heads, rush into the river; and, tucking up their petticoats to a very unseemly height, wade over the flat stones at the bottom, "which are made

Hector never condescended any other answer to this spurt, than to swing round the long end of his wet plaid, until dashing, as if by accident, a shower of water in the face of the enraged ferryman, he ran off laughing down the haugh, with his shilling safe in the bottom of his pocket.

slippery by the sulphur," to the danger even of their lives—the water above the bridge reaching nearly to their middle; and all to save a single *bode*, the sixth part of a penny, being the amount of the toll levied for crossing the bridge.

CHAPTER II.

The torrent's rush,
 The cataract's din, the ocean's distant roar,
 The echo's answer to his foot or voice—
 All spoke a language which he understood,
 And warn'd him of his way.

GRANITE.

ALTHOUGH thus gay in spirits, as he again approached towards the coast, free from all danger of pursuit from his master, yet one or two days of stormy weather had sadly cut up Hector's slight vestments, and reduced him eventually to much distress. This arose chiefly from his losing his way among the mountains, during the drifting of a storm of summer hail; so that when he had at length arrived in the town of Perth, his brogues, and even his stockings were completely worn out; his feet were bleeding with the effects of his march, and the flat bonnet which he had worn, having been blown away as he passed the angle of a rock during the storm, his appearance now, in this seat of comfort and comparative wealth, bare-headed and shoeless, was but a humiliating termination of his long journey.

Wandering along the antiquated streets, his heart sank to find himself totally unheeded, unless as an object to be avoided by the respectable; and still more was he disposed to despond at the prospect of being obliged again to seek a trading employment, for the sake of subsistence. But where to go, or to whom to apply, even for that, was now the question. Fainting with exhaustion, his changed shilling nearly all spent, he looked about in vain in the faces of his species, for interest or compassion. Reflecting on what little he knew of civilized man, his sagacity led him to avoid those quarters of the town where there was abundance or grandeur, and to seek for a friend among the pinched and lowly like himself. Wandering towards the meaner part of the town, he observed several passers-by looking on him with sympathy; for, dilapidated as his appa-

rel was, he was yet a brave and a well-favoured youth. At length he saw a middle-aged Highland woman, sitting, spinning at a door, who, eyeing him as he passed, with strong looks of interest, at length asked him into her cottage. The lad obeyed, and when she had set him on a seat, and surveyed, for an instant his ruddy countenance, long curling locks, and proud mountaineer eye; and saw, by his apparel that, though now weary and dejected, he looked, as she said, "like an honest man's bairn," her heart melted with compassion; for she was strongly reminded by him of her own favourite son, whose fair head she had but lately laid in the kirkyard of Perth.

"And whare are ye frae, my bonnie young man," she said, "and what has happened you? Alack! but it's surely an ill world this, when the like o' you is let to wander friendless on the streets o' Perth, the shoon worn off your feet, and no one to bid you to a meal o' meat."

Hector, putting a bridle on his proud feelings, told the poor woman, in a few words, that he had neither father nor mother known to him; that he had been put apprentice to a wheel-wright, but his master having used him ill, and tried all he could to break his spirit, he had just taken the road, and run for it, seeking for better luck towards the Lowlands; and being now arrived in a strange town, no one would know him, or ask him what he was willing to do.

"Oh, oh, but it's sad and sair," said the woman, "when the fatherless is left to be helped by the widow, wha has no helper to herself but Providence aboon, and nothing to depend on but what she draws out o' the thread o' the tow. But dinna be disheartened or take pride at me, my man; if I canna do aught else for the friendless orphan, I can greet for him as I've done for my ain bairn; and if, in the day of his necessity, he eats a bite o' the widow's bread, it'll ne'er be a mote on his marriage day. Now, my bonnie lad, just let me see your hand."

The boy, turning away his head, to conceal his feelings at the garrulous kindness of the Highland woman, gave her his hand.

Looking at it on both sides, and pushing up the lad's sleeve, for a species of examination to which travellers in Scotland in those days thought it no disgrace to be subjected, when she saw the clear white skin of the boy, through which shone the blue veins at his wrist, all her good opinion of him was fully verified. "A skin like an

egg!" she exclaimed, "and an ee like an eagle—a guest weel worthy o' my clean sheets. Wha kens," she added, surveying him all over, "wha's son the orphan may be after a', and wha the puir widow may be honoured to hae in her house!"

Agreeably to this primitive and sympathetic philosophy, the poor woman comforted the dejected youth, washed his feet according to the Highland fashion, and put him to rest with a mother's care, and even with much of a mother's pleasure. As she contemplated the lad as he soon got into a sound sleep, the painful pleasure of being thus reminded of her son that was gone, renewed her sorrow, and yet she thought that the indulgence of her grief over the sleeping stranger brought her a lonely widow's melancholy comfort.

A few day's stay with this woman completely restored the youth to his former vigour. But with his strength returned anxiety for independence, and the means of repaying his kind entertainer. Possessing some acquaintances above her own condition, Mrs. M'Lean did not fail to add her own efforts to the inquiries of the lad, and but a few days had elapsed, when finding that a substantial burgoess and deacon of Perth, by name Hugh M'Vey, was willing to listen to her recommendations of Hector, (clever youths being not so common as in our day,) he did her the honour to pay her a visit at her cottage, liked exceedingly the lad's looks, attended to his story with much interest, and, in ten minutes' time, the preliminaries were settled, and Hector was regularly installed in a new line of life.

Master Hugh M'Vey, dealer and chapman in the good city of Perth, and now the worthy patron of our ambitious youth, deserves a few sentences of brief description, as the representative of a class of traders now long extinct. He was an easy-tempered bachelor of forty, who, agreeably to the manners of the place and period, knowing that few could outshine him in goods and gear, and that which he dealt in *must* be had, if there was money to buy it, always acted towards those who bought from him, with that high demeanour and urbane condescension, which made them feel that it was *they* were the party obliged, and he the dignitary who conferred the obligation. Taking his cue, therefore, from the aristocratic shop-keepers of the Lowlands of his time, it was his practice to take every thing exceedingly easy, to shut the door of his shop every day at one o'clock, when he went to eat his dinner. If, of an afternoon, when he chose to go a fishing, or at any other

time a customer came, whom it was not convenient for him to attend, he would inform the intending purchaser that he was busy now, and bid him call to-morrow when he would be at leisure.

It may easily be seen how great a man our youth was soon constituted, as the juvenile doer for such a person as this, and known, as he grew up tall and manly, to be an exceeding favourite with his new master. As the burgess's days of fishing began to multiply, as fast as Hector got acquainted with the details of his craft, and his long summer evenings of bowling-green playing in the outskirts next became invested with sundry social invitations, the lad was left much to himself, and thus the free exercise of his own thoughts soon again worked themselves into restlessness, if not discontent, agreeably to the unerring philosophy of the human character. But this intruding discontent, if it deserve the name, was of a very different species and intensity from the slavish depression endured in his original situation, and arose more out of the wantonness of ease and plenty, and the not less powerful bias of disposition, than from any privation; or real cause of complaint. Little of the trading spirit as there comparatively was in the simple transactions of his employer, with his long known customers, or as there appeared in the good-natured and benevolent disposition of the burgess, yet this was, by no means, the case with many others with whom Hector occasionally came in contact; and the fast developing constitution of his own mind was so repugnant to every thing having a mean or mercenary appearance, that, promising as were his prospects, as the favourite of the bachelor, and easy as was his life in a quiet country town, he began to look upon his good prospects with a vague and discontented dread. Along with all this, a pervading pride of nature, or of blood, in the temperament of the youth, and some intrusive notion that he was designed for higher things, made him look upon his employments with true Highland contempt, which he, at the same time, suspected to be tolerably unreasonable.

But now was the time of life when he began to feel of what stuff nature had made him, and, reason or none, all he could tell was, that, at times, he felt himself peculiarly unhappy. Even the taste he had received during his runaway excursion, of the grand and poetic impression of the mountains, increased the indefinite restlessness of his mind. The roving life, and the hardy fatigues of the free Highlander, appeared to him invested with charms irresistible—the echoing forest and the bounding roe, the craggy peak and wild glen, incessantly haunted his romantic imagination.

Tale also, and song, and heroic romance, now brought frequently to his maturing mind, or rising upon his memory with the music of nature, invested all this, and the wild legends of the Highlands, with an interest which was enhanced by ignorance itself, and charms which fancy made almost inexpressible.

Still time went on, and still this disposition increased, until it turned into the same dissatisfied *ennui* which torments the great, and thus those "nameless longings," which the best hearts have beat with in all generations, became the constant companion of the tradesman-boy. Too young, as yet, to understand the political news of his time, which came in brief and garbled snatches from the south, or the relative situation of his own country, then far from happy in general, under the government of the House of Hanover, and agitated from the one end to the other, by the fierce disputes of Whig and Jacobite, he only saw the town of Perth occasionally disturbed by the marching and counter-marching of southern soldiers, and heard exaggerated rumours of tumults and robberies in the neighbouring Highlands, which the unfortunate red-coats were vainly attempting to suppress. But the reports brought from the hills on a market-day, by some of the grave Highland proprietors who dealt with the burghers, the sentiments uttered, and the predictions given out of what was soon to take place, were of a nature which might well puzzle the understanding, as they excited the curiosity and impatience, of our ardent youth.

Under all these circumstances, seldom has kindness been felt more burdensome than became the very goodness of Hector's good-natured master; nor could gratitude well be put to a severer trial, than that which compelled his honourable mind to make any sacrifice of himself, and his restless inclinations, to the feelings of him to whom he owed so much. He knew not, however, while reflecting in this manner, that occurrences were going on, surely and secretly, which, without compromising his own feelings, were preparatory to another change in his condition.

CHAPTER III.

The trumpets blew, and the colours flew,
 And every man to his armour drew;
 The Whigs were never so much aghast.

SCOTCH BALLAD.

ONE morning, before Hector's usual hour of rising, as he lay in his little dormitory, dreaming of his favourite subject, the mountains, and was roaming, in fancy, among those wild glens into which he as yet had only had in reality a hurried peep, the phantasies of his sleep seemed to become so real as to strike vividly even upon his external senses. From following, in his dream, dark legions of the warlike Gael, as they plunged into the forests or threaded the thickets of the mountains, he thought he himself bore broadsword and target among them, and led his men to the coming war, while the valleys echoed to the tread of their feet, and the warlike music of the bagpipe seemed to be reverberated from the rocks with a sound that stirred his spirit like enchantment. The pipers seemed to blow louder and louder, and the tread of his men to become more distinct as they tramped the sod, in some dreary glen, until the former became almost deafening in its pealing note, and he began to wonder withal whither he was proceeding, or who was this armed clan of whom he made one. A loud shout now rose from a shifting something, of either hills or houses, and amidst the din and confusion he heard the cry of "The black watch! the black watch!" rising upon the wind, as if to solve the mystery which momentarily puzzled him. In another instant, the skirl of the bagpipe seemed almost at his ear, and, starting from sleep, he found it proceeded from the street without.

Jumping from his bed, he soon divined what had caused his dream, and that a party of the Black Watch, of which he had often heard, and about which he was vehemently interested, were at that moment tramping past under his window. He would scarcely take time to dress himself, so anxious was he to get a sight of that far-famed band; but so

hard had he been to awake, that by the time he had got to the foot of his stair, and had the door opened, the last remains of the company, which had just passed through the town on an early march, were turning the angle of the street to issue from the north gate, and the dark bonnets and gleaming arms of a few of them were all that his eye caught, while the loud bagpipe music was still sounding strongly in the still silence of the morning.

About to dart after them, to gratify as well his fancy as his curiosity, a heavy hand at the moment caught him by the shoulder, with—

“Whar awa!—whar awa, young man? Nae time for sodgering at this time o’ the morning. Dinna ye see there’s a’ the shaps round us beginning to open baith their een an’ their mouths? and deacon M’Vey should ay be the foremost. Na, never mind farlies, Hector, my man, but draw the fastenings, and drap the shutters frae the windows, for it doesna do for young men, nor yet young maidens, to let their heads run after the sodgers.”

Hector saw that it would not do to gratify himself against the pleasure of his indulgent master, and proceeded in silence to the duties of his employment. But he found, by experience, that it is not so easy a matter for either young men or young maidens, to keep their heads from running upon that which commends itself to their inclination; and all day the Black Watch, the flower of Athol and Lochabar, and the choice men of the clans, and brave Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochnell, and Master Campbell of Finab, and the proud Grant of Ballindallock, who watched the merry valleys of Strathspey, or ranged the braes of Badenock, and Simon Frazer of Lovat himself, whose black Highlanders ranged the great glen of Scotland, from Fort Augustus to the old castle of Inverness—were the talk, and nothing else that day, of all who had a morsel of enthusiasm in them who inhabited the old city of Perth.

It was no wonder that Hector’s enthusiasm was increased by the descriptions he heard on every side of these gallant men, especially by the women, who were quite enthusiastic in their admiration of them, from Lovat himself and his Frazers, and Ballindallock and his Grants, gentlemen every man of them, as well as the Camerons of Argyleshire, and the Stewarts of Appin, from the colonel who rode in front of all, to the piper who played at their head—the latter not only a gentleman too, but a bard and a man of Highland erudition, and who performed his duties with more pride than an English general.

"O but they were braw chields!" exclaimed the maids of Perth, "and clean of leg, and light of heel, and warm of heart on a cauld day, every one of them, as ever sat on a hill-side wi' a fortunate lass on the lee of his plaidie."

But as to particular information regarding this interesting corps, Hector could get little or nothing out of the sober burgess, his master, who, justly aware of the danger of this species of fascination to a youth with Hector's prospects, discouraged his inquiries, and represented the Watch as a dangerous armament of self-elected Highlanders, who had associated themselves into a corps under colour of military efficiency, merely as an excuse for being allowed openly to wear those arms so dear to their fathers, and which, on the passing of the disarming act, their proud spirits would not suffer them to part with. Not content, however, with this bald information, which was tolerably correct as far as it went, Hector resolved to go down the same evening to visit the widow M'Lean, his early patroness, to whom he usually applied for all internal information regarding the people of the hills.

On his way thither, he observed the streets to be more than usually crowded with Highland strangers, among which, various groups of red soldiers, as the southern infantry were called by way of reproach, lounged about quite apart from the more bold mountaineers. Taking little heed, however, the youth proceeded on and was soon seated by the peat fire of the poor widow, whose former kindness it was not his nature to forget.

"Things are mickle altered since I hae mind," said widow M'Lean, in answer to Hector's inquiries. "I kend the time when a Highland gentleman didna need to take an oath to German George, no more than to Glenco Willie, for the sake of liberty to wear a bidag on his thigh, or a claymore on his haunch, as his fathers had done before him, and when there was nae watch across the hills, but the gude auld neighbourly watch o' the like of Duncan M'Naughton, or the sensible protection of Evan M'Evan. And though they sometimes milked a body dry enough, wi' their black meal or mant, or whatever they took frae us, odd, we sometimes got a fat sheep, or may be a gude stot, or a yeanning, if the chields had a lucky creagh in the Lowlands. Oh! but the Earl of Mar has had mickle to answer for, for his ill-brew'd browst o' the fifteen, for it was that, and the weary scrimage of Glenshields, that has given the new German folk that's come to rule over Scotland, an excuse to bring into the happy glens ayont the Grampians sae many troubles."

"But the Black Watch," said Hector, attempting to bring back the wandering ideas of the talkative widow.

"Ou, I've naething to say against the Black Watch; they're pretty men, but I wish they could hae kepted their swords and dirks, without swearing to serve this Hanover laird, for they're leal lads, and dinna know southron deceit."

"But, what do you think is bringing the Watch on the march just now, piping and drumming through the town of Perth?"

"Ou, what should I ken? It's a southron fashion, nae doubt. But I hear that there's to be a great rising o' the Watch, and a many more made o' them, and the Earl o' Crawford, a rank Lowlander, is to be their commander; and ye may be sure the Hanover Elector has his ain views to do wi' our Highland lads; for Simon of Lovat, and other auld lairds, are going out, and there's the Whig lairds are coming in, and the Watch is to be made a thousand strong, wi' the brawest men that can be gathered off the hills frae Dornoch to Dumbarton; and they're a' to meet in the valley of Glenlyon, aboon Aberfeldy; and proud men they'll be, nae doubt, but we'll just see what'll come o't."

The heart of Hector swelled at this intelligence, but, obliged to suppress his rising wishes, he quietly proceeded:

"But you don't seem to approve of the duties of this gallant legion," said Hector, anxious to hear the opinions, as well as the information, of the sagacious old woman, "who are stationed in bands across the hills, as I hear tell, to be naething but the guardians of Scotland."

"It's all very weel for them to guard their ain fire-sides, and to march and flourish their broadswords; but the Black Watch shouldna demean themselves, for the sake of pleasing this new king, to undertake, like the red soldiers, and other thief-takers o' the law, to hunt out and herry our poor ruined lairds; and other Cearnachs, who may be drive twa or three score o' beasts frae the Lowlands, now and then, and gar as pay a neivefu' o' black meal, whilk is never missed. It's easy to talk about robberies and spulzie, but there's braw men hae lost their all since the fifteen, and *must* live, and a wee bit creagh, and a cattle lifting, is whyles a great help to pay the laird his rent. Even an honest quarrel and brulzie among the glens is naething but what Highlandmen have been used to do, since ever I hae mind, and just helps to while away the weariness o' the lang nights, and to keep their claymores in order."

This mode of reasoning was just letting in a new light

into Hector's mind, when a sudden noise was heard in the street; the door of the house was hurriedly opened, and a young woman entered, with terror in her looks, saying that a great brulzie had taken place at the cross of Perth, between some strangers from the hills and the red soldiers; and the folk, she added, were all running, and some said that Duncan M'Naughton, or Shaw, the great Cearnach from Strathday, had been seen in the crowd, and had drawn a short claymore that he had hid under his plaid, and swore he would clear the causeway o' the *seider diarg*; and so he was now laying about him, and the people were shutting their shops for fear o' the fray.

"Duncan M'Naughton, sayest thou, lassie?" cried the woman in amaze. "It's not possible that Duncan would venture on the streets of Perth after what he's done. It's as mickle as his neck's worth. Hector, my man, if ye *will* run to the fray, take care of your ain crown. Hoigh! such times!"

Before the woman had the half of the last sentence uttered, Hector was off, and up the street; but by the time he arrived at the cross, the crowd met him as flying from the danger; and the red soldiers were running from all quarters, in obedience to the drum, whose loud and hasty beat to arms gave an alarming idea of what was going forward.

The scene of strife, when Hector drew near it, though comparatively limited in extent, presented that silently warlike appearance, which was in earlier times much more common on the streets of the Scottish capital, than, notwithstanding all that is said of the quarrelsomeness of the Highlanders, ever was the case in the orderly town of Perth. The first object that was conspicuous was a stout middle-sized Highlander, who, clad in a dress better than common, and now bare-headed from the press of the skirmish, layed about him against above a dozen bayonets, with a bravery which, though evidently on the defensive, showed him to be sensible that he was fighting for his life. A few other Highlanders, some with short knives or skenookles, and more with naught but aloe-thorn sticks, aided the riot, and increased the confusion. But, although several of the townsmen, who also hated the red soldiers, occasionally assisted in embarrassing them in their attacks upon the principal combatant, this was all that either they or the Highlanders were able to effect; for the unpopular disarming act having deprived them of all efficient weapons, they were able to make little head against so many bayonets

along with a single sword, which now and then ventured to strike in from a thin lath of an officer, who warily, yet zealously, made himself busy in the fray.

Though occasionally cheered by loud shouts from the townsmen of "Well done! cut again, and give it them, brave Duncan M'Naughton," the bare-headed Highlander's case was evidently fast becoming desperate, notwithstanding a degree of bravery, which might well excite the astonishment of the multitude, who, from outer stairs and numerous windows, gazed breathlessly upon the riot beneath them. For a youth, such as Hector, to take any part in an affray so dangerous, was evidently madness, yet the spirit that was in him stirred him up almost to frenzy, as he clenched his empty hand, finding no weapon within his reach with which he might strike a blow for the hard-pressed mountaineers, who fought so bravely with such odds against them.

As the drum continued to beat to arms without, and the soldiers to pour in, the shouts of the towns-people, who also flocked to the spot, increased the confusion, while lights now glanced from doors and windows, the excitement became general, and the fray assumed an appearance absolutely terrific. With the fearlessness of youth and a kindred spirit, Hector had got within a few yards of the spot where Duncan M'Naughton still swung round his short broadsword, and kept at bay half a score of bayonets, when, observing the manœuvres of the lathy officer to get behind the veteran, taking advantage of the fall of a soldier, who was cut down by a back-stroke of the Highlander's active claymore, he plucked the bayonet out of the fallen man's hand, and flew like a young tiger upon the insidious subaltern. The gentleman of the spontoon fell back among the others, and immediately our youth found himself in the very thick of the fray, while the shouts of the multitude near, and the strong Gaelic expression which he heard from the mountaineer himself, indicated the value they set upon his timely service.

The soldiers now began to retreat among the crowd, and the Cearnach to regain some confidence, when a rush of the people on one side, along with the sudden entrance of a fresh party of soldiers, backed by several of the magistrates, changed the fate of the day; and while Hector opposed his bayonet to the sword of the retreating officer, Duncan M'Naughton was surrounded from behind, and a total rout of his party became inevitable. Fortunately for our youth, his own dexterous activity became his salvation from a fate

much worse, to his apprehension, than a deep wound in the fray; namely, to be carried to jail as a rioter and abetter of a Cearnach, of whom the officers of the law had long attempted the capture in vain. First driving back among the confused crowd, and then hastily mounting one of the outer stairs, from which its occupants had fled in confusion but a moment before, he was enabled to witness at his leisure the upshot of the affair. Several of the soldiers and towns-people he saw carried off desperately wounded, and afterwards led past in shouting triumph by the soldiery, town-officers, and magistrates, the athletic figure of M'Naughton himself, the blood streaming from him in several parts of his head and body, while, with sullen dignity, he appeared to submit to his fate. Soon after, as Hector followed the crowd, he saw the heavy doors of the old jail open to receive, and slowly close upon, the manly form of the reluctant prisoner; and every one engaged being now glad to make a safe retreat to his own home, the military, by this time in better order, found little difficulty in clearing the streets, and Hector, with no hurt but a slight prick of a sword on the shoulder, got safely up into his own little dormitory.

CHAPTER IV.

What fellow's this?

A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him out of the house.

SHAKESPEARE.

ONE evening, after nightfall, not long after the foregoing event, the streets of Perth presented with peculiar truth, that gloomy and deserted appearance which is often the characteristic of a small country town. This night Hector stood meditatively at the low door of his shop, or rather store, looking listlessly up and down at the casual straggler; and as his eye rested occasionally upon the dim lamps along the narrow venal, and the other obscure lights, which peeped from windows of shops like his own, he felt a strong twinge of that depressing *ennui*, to which no bosom, high or low, is entirely a stranger. His master was out, having left him to prepare for the market-day to be held on the morrow, and which, every thing being now ready, he longed for exceedingly, as expected to bring with it the usual excitement of trading bustle. Shutting the little half door of the store, he returned within, and trimming the single oil lamp which hung from the low ceiling, he sat down to think of his favourite subject, the Highland hills. Here his thoughts mixed themselves with the various rumours with which the town was filled, and imperfect accounts both from the Lowlands and the mountains, which only excited and perplexed his ill-informed judgment. To relieve his thoughts, he had taken up the ell-wand, or measuring stick, which so ill-befitted his hand; and his brooding pride, as well as vague predilections, having induced him of late to take lessons, with which he assiduously engaged himself, in the broad-sword exercise, from a young Highlander only known to him by the name of Farquhar, he was practising his guards and his cuts against a high roll of plaiding cloth

which stood in the inner shop, when he heard the half-door scraping open behind him, and looking round, saw the stalwart figure of a Highland stranger drawn up to its height within, after having stooped as he entered the low door of the shop. Without a word's speaking, the stranger paced straight into the back part of the store.

The stranger and our youth looked for a moment at each other. To the straight back and haughty step of a better-class Highlander, Hector was no stranger, from the high bearing of the gentleman rover or gentleman piper, to that of the lord of the isles himself; but the air with which this personage strode into the store, and the smile of contempt with which he cast his eyes round on the bales and barrels choking up the place, was such as Hector had seldom had occasion to witness; and certainly conveyed no flattery to him who had the honour to be the keeper of all this goods and gear. A tall *buirdly* figure was the least thing remarkable in the appearance of this impressive stranger. To see the aristocratic cock's feather stuck gracefully in the front of the high bonnet of a mountain gentleman, was nothing uncommon in the town of Perth; but gold lace, edging the scarlet waistcoat so seldom worn in the hills, a small portion of which revealed itself to Hector's glance beneath the plaid which crossed the gentleman's breast, as well as the round bowl of a long Spanish pistol, the bright silver of which just peeped from beneath the dark tartan of his short coat, gave token that this was no common man. No sword, however, appeared on his haunch, for the obnoxious act, then some time passed, made such a weapon rather too conspicuous to be worn in approaching a town; but the belted plaid, whose long folds hung by this gentleman's side, did not seem as ever meant to conceal the ample broadsword or dirk, the threatening hilt of which, mounted also with silver, and garnished with the usual convenient apparatus, sat close to the brawny thigh of the stranger.

"Be the chapman not at home then?" said the personage, casting another haughty glance round the shop.

The blood mounted into Hector's face, as he found this contempt strike home upon himself, and under the impulse of the moment, making the ell-wand that he held sound upon the floor, while his eyes flashed upon the stranger, he boldly replied, "My master, sir, is Deacon of the drapers, and town councillor of Perth."

The gentleman opened his eyes with astonishment, and, as he gazed upon the youth, his haughty features gradually

relaxed into a smile, when, putting up his hand, with great ceremony, to his bonnet, he lifted it gracefully from his black bushy head, and made our hero a profound bow.

The irony of this action, instead of humbling him for whom it was intended, deepened the affront; and the youth, throwing down the ell-wand with high contempt, merely turned his back on the stranger, and walked, in silence, towards the window.

"By the soul of my father," exclaimed the unknown, coming forward and offering his hand to our youth, "there's some mistake here; for it's evident that old mother Nature, who takes no charge of her own, after she strikes them off her anvil, never made thee for selling and swapping goods and gear like a Lowlander. It's no fault of mine, not to expect such as thee in a chapman's shop. Nay, refuse not my hand, boy! there would be danger in that: I'll give thee to boast what few others can, that Evan M'Evan has begged thy pardon. There, upon my word, a handsome fellow, to be flourishing an ell-wand like a Kirkaldy tailor."

"It is your pleasure, sir," said Hector, almost affected, "to reproach me with my misfortune."

"God forbid, young man," said the stranger, resuming his dignity, and appearing still more interested; "although I am sorry to see so likely a fellow cooped up in such a hole as this, over a gathergae of merchandising trumpery, I know that on the hills from which I come, the trees of the wood have not the choice of their own situation, and that the winds of heaven, which scatter about alike the seeds of the strong oak and the feeble willow, sometimes let the one fall in the place where the other should be. I see you understand me, young man. By heavens, youth, you have the very eye of the eagle. It's a pity you could not build your nest among the mountains."

The majestic stranger seemed to Hector to rise a foot taller as he finished his speech, but so affected was the youth with this picturesque illustration of his fate and circumstances, that the rising reply stuck in his throat.

"To be sure," resumed the chieftain, "the eagles' haunts in the hills are barren and bare, often dreary and stormy; and there grows not on the cliffs or the moors, the comforts which you merchants import from the southland. But the free arm, and the free spirit, and the mountain air, and the forest venison—pah! what a musty smell is here!—I am talking to you, young man, in the spirit of a Highlander, but perhaps you prefer this murky den where you are."

"Only tell me, air stranger, how I can get there, and live by the use of arm or limb," cried Hector, with animation, "and the eagle you speak of shall not fly much quicker than I shall bound away to the mountains."

"Hum—very well: I thought you would say so," said the chief, suddenly; "but I must not, for all that, advise you to be rash in turning your back upon the comfortable quarters and sheep's-head broth of a burgess of Perth. It is now time, however, that I should have some talk with my worthy acquaintance; and, harkye, youth! in the mean time, be discreet, and do not repeat the name that I have just named in thy private ear, and see that thou get me speedy speech of the good deacon, thy master."

Hector seemed a little at a loss how to act at the moment, which the stranger chief observing, made a sign to his servant, who, without being observed, had stood all this while in faithful watch by the dark cheek of the door. Immediately, a head was thrust cautiously in; after which came the short body of a sturdy Highlander, who, drawing up to more than his full height, took off the plain bonnet from his head, and asked what was his honour's pleasure.

"Can you keep a chapman's shop, Dougald! and be ready to sell the merchant's gallimaufry, while this junior here goes to seek for his master?"

"Her nainsel doesna understand ta chop," said the shock-headed Gael, looking round upon the goods with a bewildered look, "but if her honour's pleasure be to trust her lang in tis chocked bourock, I wadna wonder but some of the merchant's jigs-and-jugs wad find their way into her nainsel's ain pouches."

"I would not wonder in the least," said the chief, good-naturedly answering the taciturn grin which developed the white teeth of the Highlander, "but the men of Breadalbane do not stoop to *liffing* of so low a kind—so, Dougald, ye'll just take your stance here beside the bing of plaiding; like the snuff-man's decoy sign, in the Cowgate of Edinburgh; for you see, if any customer come in, it may not be convenient for me to be patent just now, and so I'll step beyond the reach of the light of the chruaskin."

"Deevil nor her chop were at ta bottom o' Lochow," mumbled the Highlander, taking his stand beside the bale, with an angry mutter, as his master retreated within; "I wad rather mount ta sentry post on the windy side o' Fort William, than be stanced beside a plaiding, like a Lowland weaver. Hunch! Ta chief be o'er fool-hardy, I'm thought;

an' she'll may be find she's put her finger in the crew's nest, afore she win out o' the north port o' Perth."

It was not without some misgivings about his untradesman-like guests, that Hector consented to go up the street to look for the burgess. He had not been gone five minutes, when, to the great uneasiness of the unwilling warder of the shop, a strange man of respectable appearance entered, and stepped familiarly within. From the manner in which he gazed round him, the intruder seemed in some haste or alarm; but seeing the store deserted—no uncommon occurrence in a country-town—he quietly took a position by seating himself on the counter, determined to watch until the owner should come in.

"She'll just hand her whisht for a wee," thought the Highlander within himself, as he stood ensconced behind the plaiding; "may be the deevil will put it into the man's head to gae out again without a spoke or a spear."

However useful the devil is upon most occasions, it did not, however, please him to answer Dougald's invocation in the present emergency; and the intruder seemed determined to divide with him the high and responsible office of shop-keeper. At length, looking unconsciously towards its inner recesses, as his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, this new person thought he saw something within, of an exceedingly strange and dubious character. Next, he heard something breathe almost at his ear, which caused such a tremour all over him, that he scarcely had courage to turn his head to look beyond the plaiding. On the first movement, however, of his head in that direction, his terrified eyes became fixed upon the broad brown countenance of a bearded Highlander, in a place where Highlandmen ought not to be. The worthy citizen never having been a man of renowned courage, sudden surprise, at seeing such an apparition hidden among his friend's goods, with the inexplicable terrors that seemed to surround him, alarmed as he was on entering the shop, completely deprived him of his natural speech. Continuing, however, to gaze in the Highlander's face until his own jaw fell, and his hair began to rise, the countenance of the Gael seeming to keep time to all these movements, by the various grins to which it was subjected, the latter, at length losing all patience, broke the fearful silence by a wild swear of,

"Tamh her! what will she be glouring at!"

"Friend! honest man! what brings you there?"

"What brings her here? Toot!—what'll she be doing

but just keeping ta shantleman's chop. Is tat ony wonderment?"

"But there's surely somebody else among the barrels! What can this mean?"

"Teevil a ane but the ta rattons an' ta mice whilkter be plenty in ta toon o' Perth. Hoogh! stand back! I tell her I'm ta chopkeeper."

"How do you do, deacon? I'm well pleased to meet with you,"—said a voice out of the dark, and instantly came forward the imposing figure of the stranger chieftain.

"Heaven be neest us!" exclaimed the citizen, in increased terror, as he gazed on the armed chief. "It's all true what I heard, and the auld town o' Perth is in the utmost jeopardy. O Evan M'Evan, Laird of Glenmore, have mercy this night on me and mine!"

A long chuckling laugh at the poor man's terror was the only answer given to this earnest appeal, but as the intruding baillie turned his head the other way, the white teeth and gleaming eyes of the grinning Highland gilly seemed, even in their ludicrous or ferocious expression, to promise to him no matter for merriment.

"Maister M'Evan, what brings you here?" he gaspingly exclaimed; "and how have you taken up unlawful possession of the goods and premises of a respectable citizen o' this burgh? If ye've brought a legion o' your men frae the hills to beleaguer our town, and burn the auld jail o' Perth, as I hear tell, I hope ye'll at least spare honest men like me and my unfortunate friend, the worthy proprietor of this shop."

"Teevil a fears o' ta chop! if I may be so bold," said the Highlander, striking in. "Am I not a chopkeeper myself? and what's ta body feard for? Oigh! she's no worth his glory's speaking to, wi' her burning an' her beleaguring."

At this moment the plot was thickened by the hasty entrance of the burly burgess himself, followed by Hector; and on looking around him, M'Vey was more startled at the unexpected presence of deacon M'Farlane on the scene, than at the other strangers, for whose sudden visit at his premises Hector had of course fully prepared him.

"This is an unexpected honour, Glenmore," said the burgess, pulling off his hat, "but it's something oddly timed, methinks, considering the fizz the town is in the night. Lord, Mr. M'Evan, but ye're feard for naething. But shut up the shop-door, Hector, my lad, and make all haste;

for faith, if the townsmen get sight of my honourable visitors this night, the baillie there and I will have a fair chance to get a snug lodging in our ain jail."

"The Lord forbid!" exclaimed the baillie; "but hadn't I better leave you, gentlemen?—ye'll be far better without me;" and the terrified functionary, stepping down off the counter, prepared to go.

"No!" cried the chief, in a voice of thunder. "You *shall not go*—to put your caittif townsmen in a panic about nothing. Besides, baillie," he added, cajolingly, "I want your services myself. Are you not a puissant man and a magistrate?"

"Why, *I am* a man in some authority, certainly," said the baillie, the forces of his mind, such as they were, greatly rallied by this seasonable flattery; "and, being constituted by Providence as of the powers that be ordeened by God, we are prayed for constantly in the haly kirk, that our hands may be strengthened to be a terror——"

"Yes, but your Whiggish prayers are sometimes answered the contrary way," interrupted the chieftain, with a dry smile, "so that if you are not a terror to evil doers, evil doers are a sore terror to you, and that answers its own end."

"Ye are pleased to be pleasant, Glenmore, in the midst o' danger," said the baillie, "but in times like thae, great power and authority are beset wi' many cares, that gar the hands shake wi' anxiety, as mine hae done this night; and we that sit in high places, and dispense judgment, hae mickle need o' the prayers o' the saunts; for, as the poet-man says, uneasy is the head that wears a crown."

The idea of a crown, in connexion with a burgh baillie, and the serious air with which this was delivered, was too much for the gravity of the listeners, and a loud burst of laughter was the only response which the poor magistrate received to his pathetic speech; which made him suspect that he had said something not quite orthodox to his present purpose; although what that might be, was beyond his penetration to divine.

"Come, gentlemen," said the burgess, "this is no place for such high personages as you to hold your communications, so, with your leave, we will adjourn up stairs, where, by the help o' a seasonable excitement of the bottle, without which no business ever yet was brought to a lucky conclusion, we will, may be, come to a proper understanding—for it cannot be a sma' affair that has brought Glen-

more frae the hills, to trust himself this night in the angry town of Perth."

The adjournment was carried accordingly, Dougald Downie being placed as sentinel without, to see that no one intruded, and Hector, being by the request of the chieftain, permitted to be present during the deliberation. As the subject of their conversation, however, cannot be well understood without some brief reference to the internal circumstances of the times, by no means as yet understood in the south, we shall venture upon a few particulars in a new chapter.

CHAPTER V.

But wha's the man amang ye a',
 Will gae to the Tolbooth door wi' me?
 O up then spak him mettled John Hall,
 (Frae the Laigh Tiviotdale was he,)
 If it should cost my life this very night,
 I'll gae to the Tolbooth door wi' thee.

SCOTCH BALLAD.

"METHINKS we could have dispensed, on the present occasion, with all this officious hospitality, deacon," said the haughty mountaineer, with some sternness, as he looked impatiently on what appeared to him to be the never-to-end setting down of the various flasks filled with white and red liquor, and the horn drinking-cups which it was the burgess's pleasure to place before his guests, before he would allow a word to be spoken. "I am neither come here to sell a nolt nor to buy English frippery, nor yet to drink Whig toasts to the praise of the loyal citizens of Perth—so pray have a truce to this unseasonable jingling of stoups."

"Godsake, laird, will ye no let a body strengthen one's heart with a common dram, just to prepare them for what ye're about to propound," said the baillie, filling himself a tass of excellent French *eau de vie*, which the burgess had just set down—with a hand, however, that showed by its shaking how much his nerves had need of the application. "Fill yoursel' a toothfu', laird," he added to the chieftain, "since ye *are* come amongst us. We hae nae bread an' sant here, to eat oursel's into friendly confidentiality; but if ye'll no pledge me in a wholesome dram o' the gude-man's lickor afore we begin, I'll hae little brew o' your intercommuninga."

"It's a wise propose, baillie," said the good-natured host, filling up his canp, "just to drink the dry meal aff the tap

of the conference, that we may see clearer to the bottom o't, as the drouthy minister said to the Presbytery. But, baillie! what's the matter wi' you now, that ye're ta'en the hiccup already wi' that single mouthfu' o' lickor? Fright makes men sober, but diana gar them yisk at that rate, or make faces, as you did when I entered the shop this night."

"I just want to know one thing, deacon, just one thing, frae his honour Glensmore there, afore we say a single word—hic!" gasped the baillie; "whether it be true what I've this minute learned in the court ha' among the baillies convened in council, that there's a legion of red-footed fallows frae the hills ambuscaded among the firs ayont the Tay, for to come in by the Skinner's gate when we're a' sound asleep, to mob and maltreat the auld jail of Perth, and may be to set fire to the town, and murder us a' and our wives and bairns, in our beds, just for the sake of rescuing out o' the hands o' law and justiciary, that notorious loon and limmer, Duncan M'Naughton, the robber. Na, ye needna laugh, Deacon M'Vey, I'm a magistrate and a man in power! and I hae a right to put such questions—and the powers that be hae always the most orthodox information on a' matters that concern the state, and the peace and preservation o' this realm—hic!"

The little baillie set himself back on his long-backed chair, with his mouth pursed up in terrible officiality, after uttering this triumphant speech; and even the bluff face of the burgess lengthened considerably, as both, now waiting anxiously for a reply, gazed for a moment in the dark flashing eyes of the chieftain.

The momentary sternness of the laird's face, however, fell instantly into a nose-curling contempt. "By the mass of our fathers," he at length said, "but there is more sense, and as much respectability, in the single forefinger of a Stonehaven fishwife, clad as it is wi' brass rings, and barkened with herring scales, than in the brainless sculls of those Lowland baillies. Why should I reply to such babble as that? Have we not oppression enough already in the Highlands, since Scotland lost her king, and Mar lost his head, but we must provoke another scouring and scattering, to set good men by the ears? Law and justice, say you? Have we not already red soldiers from the south to hound us out among the hills, and teach us the law by bayonet and lead—and black-coated ravens from the low country, to teach our very chieftains roguery and greed, and to harry the homes of our poor clansmen, until they take to the roads

far a bit and a sip? And have not you townsmen white-wigged men, wi' parchment faces, and red gowns, to take your part against the simple mountaineer, whilk are coming into Perth to-morrow, wi' sound o' trumpet, like a triumph, and all to hang a poor fellow or two whom their own injudicious oppression has made thieves and robbers. But that is not what I am come to speak of, nor will it serve any good purpose to dilate to you upon Highland troubles. But the fact is, gentlemen burgesses of Perth, and men of power, (as it happens,) I have a particular reason for wishing that no scaith may at this time come o'er a certain man that you have just named, who is to be tried to-morrow before the lords, for what you call robbery and hame-sucken."

"I told you sae! I told you what would be the upshot o' a' this long speciality," cried the baillie, with vehement courage; "that's a' to prepare us for a treasonable threatment against the powers that be. There'll be a Highland rescue and jail breaking this night, as sure as the deevil's a gentleman!"

"You're quite mistaken, worthy baillie," said Glenmore, quietly; "if there was any such plot, I would not have demeaned myself to have come up into your ill-flavoured truckery shops, in the heart of Perth, to ask favour or speak civility with the best baillie in your town. But come, gentlemen, if we are to be friends, let us talk not like merchants only, but simply like men. In brief, here is the deacon, an old friend of mine, and, you, baillie, I've seen you before, and that in a place where you did not talk so loudly about the powers that be, whether ordained of God or not, as is your manner of speaking—they were then rather of a different sort to yourself. But you must manage, by crink or by crank, to get Duncan McNaughton slipped from the inside to the outside of the old jail of Perth, and just let him make a lang leg back to the hills for this once, to see his wife and children, poor fellow, and I'll take care that he behaves better in future."

"Did any mortal flesh ever hear such a propose?" exclaimed the baillie; "to let off ane o' the greatest limmers between this and Caithness; after a' the pains we've had to catch him? Didna he drive the whole cattle frae the hills o' Cairncourlie, and left the bow-legged laird hardly a stot? Didna he rub Lady Glengrowl's meal-girnal last winter in the snaw? and carried off the vera side o' beef that hung up in the kitchen, so that if it hadna been for yourself and others, Glenmore, she might hae starved, pair lady? And did not he and his men carry off Saunders

M'Dough's siller hist, out o' the spence, hody and he and left the honest drover hardly a bodie to pay the toll ! to Angusshire ? And yet ye'll come here to try to c the woodie o' its ain, after the fallow has been ta'en caged, an' shall be tried, and condemn'd to be execut the most orderly and civilized manner. Ne'er speak Glenmore ! ne'er speak o't !"

"What say you, burgess?" said the chief, address M'Vey with a look of quiet determination.

"It's little that I can say on such a business," said burgess. "The baillie there is better acquainted with jailor that keeps the cage of Perth, and the hangman does the work, forbye the writer and lawyer bodies, can quirk a man either into the woodie or out the wo just as they finger the siller. But really, Glenmore, ye should seek to cheat the gallows o' its ain, in respect sould M'Naughton, now when he is ta'en, I can hardly louse ; for though Duncan is a braw sony fallow, and wh buys and pays like a gentleman, it's weel known he great a Cearnach as ever drove a stot frae the Lowlands."

"Why, as to that, burgess," said M'Evan, if every ge man that drives a horned beast o'er the hills were t licked up by the long tongue of the law, the old tolboe Perth would require a new wing to the shoulder o't ; as to the reasons that have induced me to come hithe your purse-proud town, to try my influence for the sa of the life of an ill-used man, suffice it to say, that the good and substantial, never speaking of the prayers of wife and the tears of his youngsters ; so now, if you men, you will put your wits together, and see if you not devise a way to bring the poor culprit off, for I am assured that Duncan, if he gets once clear of this sc will be henceforward a changed man."

"It's not possible, Glenmore," said the baillie, zealous. "The pyet's a thief in its very nature, and when it gets a hardened age, and its tongue grows black, it's o'er to learn new manners. So, saving your pardon, sir, just be bout to let the lawyers take their will o' Duncan."

head and hallan of every man that has a hand in the ploy. So take your choice, baillie and deacon both."

The two citizens sat looking a moment at each other, but the silence was first broken by the burgess.

"If I may speak for myself, I should not be ill-pleased to see M'Naughton get scaut free this time, particularly as you seem to be set on the thing, Glenmore; and as there's some sma' hopes that the chield may at last keep out o' the hands o' the *seider roy*, as you call the red-back lads, in future; but, really, how it is to be managed, wi' any safety to ourselves, I know not. There's the judges come in frae Edinburgh this very day to try him, and there's as mony big wigs and writers waiting to make a guinea by his indicting, as would hang ony three honest men; and, waur than that, there's auld Duncan Forbes o' Culloden, the Lord President as he's ca'd, that kens every man o' us here in Perth, and you, too, Glenmore, and isna the body as zealous o' the law as a Pharisee, and would clap us all up in the Tolbooth ourselves, if he had the least suspicion o' any junkery pawkery, for what he ca's defeating o' the ends o' justice. I really wish ye would giv't up, sir."

"I shall never give it up: if Duncan Forbes were sitting there," said the chief, calmly, but with a glance of determination that was almost wild, "see you that!" he added, drawing the long dirk from his side, and laying its naked blade on the table; "Forbes of Culloden knows well that when Evan M'Eván breathes upon his biodag, he never takes back his word, or fails of his oath. Whom do you stare at? What should hinder Duncan M'Naughton to twist off the irons that the smith has rivetted on his legs, that is, if he get a seasonable hint or help, and the turnkey should forget to lock the door, as was done at Aberdeen, or that he should break a hole in the wall, as Dougal Macdougall brake the auld jail of Inverness, even though your Tolbooth is a strong place. Are you still afraid? By heavens, if I would not rather trust the whole affair to the management of this youth," and he pointed to Hector, "whose eye tells me that he has a spirit in his body, than to any one of you. Burgess, make me no answer, but let the thing be done; you are this junior's master, and if Duncan M'Naughton once gets his feet on the heather, he, through whose means it is chiefly effected, shall soon know that a Highlander can both avenge his own cause, and show his own gratitude."

"Stay a wee, laird, stay a wee," said the baillie, anxiously,

as the chieftain stood up, "if it maun be sae, I'll get auld Willie Capton, the writer, to take the thing in hand, as loopy a body as ever drew an affidavit; and if ye just get me twa bare legged chields frae the hills, to say as Willie tells them, we'll grease his loof weel wi' ailler, and if law and leeing ever got a man frae the gallows, Willie will do't this time for Duncan M'Naughton."

"Me get two clansmen to hold up their right-hands in a court of justice, and call God to witness to a falsehood!" said Glenmore, with indignation; "curse your Lowland craft that would moot such a proposal;" and the mountaineer took two or three strides across the room, apparently unable to utter fully his feelings. "No, no, baillie! to shoot a man fairly on the hills is a decency to that; but I'll get two Highlanders, who, if I but touch this shining blade, and mention *your name*, will think it good sport to make carrion's meat of them who will be airt and part in the hanging of M'Naughton."

"The Lord save us!" whispered the alarmed magistrate; "I'm a dead man."

"Ye shouldna hae said that, baillie," said the burgess, returning the whisper to his terrified neighbour; "I know the way of the mountain folk. If it was only but blawing on a book, as they do in England, or kissing o' your thumb instead of the calf's-skin, the lads o' the hills would neer say you nay. But this is a very different affair; and now, as ye have fairly set up the birses of the chief, ye maun try something to get out o' his ire. I'll tell you what, Glenmore," he added, addressing the chief, "I see no other way but letting the trial go on; but if you will leave this matter betwixt me and the baillie, dangerous though it is, it will be hard if we cannot find a way of saving the auld reiver frae the last loup."

The chief put out his hand to the burgess, and shook it cordially in silence. "I am in rather strange circumstances myself you see, deacon," he said, "and things are not with me as they were before the fifteen; but M'Naughton and I fought side by side; he's an old friend and fellow sufferer, and though he sometimes does, by open daring, what hundreds are doing by more crooked means, I must not allow him, if I can, to make a widow of his well far'd wife, and orphans of his braw sons and daughters, for there's poverty and ill-blood enough on the hills since auld king Jamie left his chair. Farewell, M'Vey, and hark ye, if ever you have occasion to send to the mountains, make this good youth

your ambassador. I'm mistaken, if he does not yet turn out to do you credit."

Shaking the honest burgess heartily by the hand, the chief next gave his hand kindly to Hector, into whose eyes the tears started at the effects of his own feelings, as Glenmore spoke to him some encouraging words, and, taking a parting cup of the burgess's best claret, the chieftain took his departure, leaving the others to debate together on succeeding measures.

CHAPTER VI.

Treasons capital, confess'd, and prov'd,
Have overthrow'n him!

SHAKESPEARE.

NEXT morning, by an early hour, that important event, in a Scots country town, the coming in of the lords, as it is called, or rather the opening of the criminal court by the judges on circuit, walking in procession, began, along with the circumstance of its being also market-day, to give unusual bustle to the streets of the ancient city of Perth. Before eight o'clock a waiting crowd had assembled in front of a large old-fashioned mansion, picturesquely ornamented with battlement and arched gateway. This building, used as a hotel, and inhabited by their lordships, was one of the last of those fabrics then remaining to ornament the streets of Perth, which, when that city was considered the capital of Scotland, had been the town residence of one of the higher Scots nobility.

Here, in imposing state, sat at breakfast two of the venerable senators of the college of justice, from Edinburgh, having for their guests, on this occasion, the provost and magistrates of the town, including, of course, our puissant friend, baillie M'Farlane, a pair of Edinburgh lawyers who accompanied them in circuit, and, lastly, sundry of the burghesses, and other principal men of the city, among whom, on this high day, deacon M'Vey himself had been honoured with an invitation. Before the arched gateway of the hotel paced a double guard of English soldiers, and without stood a whole company of the same, who, with a posse of quaint-looking town-officers, clad also in scarlet coats, and valiantly holding up long battle-axe halberts, besides various other inferior functionaries, all waited to take part in the forthcoming procession.

The conversation of the puissant personages above, over their substantial Scots breakfast, related, of course, chiefly to the present unsettled state of the Highlands, the prevail-

ing discontented and Jacobite feeling, notwithstanding what was, in one sense, true, the mild government of the House of Hanover; the occasional lawless practices of the clansmen, notwithstanding the active measures of Marshal Wade on the one hand, and President Forbes on the other, with the many difficulties which stood in the way, both of the introduction of southern civilization, and the efficient administration of justice among these extensive districts.

But lawyers are seldom philosophers, still seldomer are they practical men, out of their own mere profession; and the mass of absurdity that was talked this morning, regarding the peculiarities of the Highlanders, and that in sounding periods of forensic construction; and the perfect ignorance that was shown of the real state and feelings of the people of the mountains, among whom there was, after all, much of both innocence of heart and happiness of life, and that by men arrayed in all the external paraphernalia of wisdom, justly astonished the shrewd sense of the good burgess, and made him question his own long experience, little accustomed as he was to the observation of ignorance in high places. Not that the worthy Ulpins and statesmen of the period were materially different from the same species of men of our day; but it seldom has suited the higher orders of society, whose business it is to legislate for the lower, or the more distinctly situated to take much pains either to make themselves well acquainted with the circumstances, or to enter into the feelings of the latter; and government and coercion being frequently considered synonymous, the latter has, at all periods, been the favourite system of the indolent, as well as being more consonant to the naturally tyrannous disposition of human nature. Hence the irritation that, at this period, prevailed in many parts of the Highlands, and hence, at all periods, have many of the noblest characters been lost to the world—some of them even perishing by the hands of the executioner. Hence, also, on this morning did the judges rejoice over the fortunate capture of the Breadalbane Cearnach, and the ample materials there appeared for his conviction, at least for a felonious riot on the streets of Perth—so that all parties present at the judges' table this morning, felt their individual importance greatly enhanced in their own eyes, by being accessory to the hanging of so notorious an offender. From these we may except, however, the burgess, Hector's master, and also the baillie, with whom the reader is already acquainted. But, whatever the fear of M'Evan might have induced the latter magistrate to resolve in secret, that did not hinder him from being

the loudest in talking of the vengeance of the law, so far as the well-ordered speech of his betters left him the opportunity.

At length, breakfast being over, which, according to the fashion of the times, was finished by a small dram of whiskey, swallowed neat, as a settler to the various substantialities of spiced ham, braxy mutton, smoked haddocks, Tay trout, kipper and honey, their lordships retired to robe; and an additional party having arrived at the door to join the procession, the whole was soon marshalled in that picturesque array appertaining to this simple, but impressive, pageant. The first blast of the trumpets which was sent forth by the high functionaries who carried these warlike instruments, and who accompany, to this day, the lords on circuit, to blow before them, was the signal for march, and away proceeded the solemn procession towards the court-house, situated near where the Scots parliament once sat in Perth.

Mean time, our youthful hero, Hector, whose mind had been both stirred and affected by the scene of the previous night, as well as by what he had heard respecting the accused and his family, looked forward to the one event of the day with no slight interest. This interest was deepened by several circumstances, and particularly by his recent knowledge of some small details regarding the subject of it, of which, if they do not materially serve to exculpate a criminal, constitute, by exposing the peculiarities and tendencies of human character, the very essence of useful biography. Besides, in this case, the youth had a vague idea, from what the strange chieftain had expressed, that the result of the trial was to have some sort of effect upon his own after-fate.

At the first roll of the drums, therefore, which announced the movement of the lords, Hector shut the door of his store, and ran to obtain a favourable station to witness the procession. At no time have the Scots been much treated with showy pageants; but had they ever been so, they could not easily have invented one so simple as this, which, at the same time, should be so well calculated to impress the youthful mind. The day was delightful, and the handsome, and then venerable streets of Perth, crowded as they were with citizens and strangers, and filled as were the windows, with well-dressed women, had an appearance like the gaiety and festivity of a triumph. First came a sample of the English infantry, so lauded at that day for their exploits at Ramillies and Malplaquit, but so hated in the Highlands for their inefficient and often cruel attempts to second the law. Next

came the advocates in wig and gown, and, after the trumpeters and burly mace-bearers, came in their robes of scarlet and silk, with small triangular hats above their ample wigs, the venerable figures of the judges themselves, the dispensers of life and liberty to many a trembling wight. Next came the magistrates of Perth, dressed in their best, headed by the provost, and guarded by a file of the halberdier town officers aforesaid, the whole closed by a party of the principal citizens, mustered to grace, as well as lengthen, this grand procession.

The streets had scarcely been cleared after the pageant, when the burgess returned to the duties of his shop, to which Hector also attended for some time, but with evident uneasiness. At length his master said, "Hector, my lad, it does not answer me to be seen idling in the courthouse of a market-day. I see you are anxious, as well as myself, about what is going on. Put on your bonnet, therefore, and go to the court. If you mention my name to Thomas M'Dowal, the door-keeper, he will get you a convenient seat; and be sure you take good notice, and bring me a true account of Mr. M'Naughton's behaviour on the trial."

Hector gladly accepted the considerate order of his master, and in a few minutes found himself placed for the first time in a good station, to witness the solemnities of a northern court of justice.

The interest that by this time was excited for the criminal, as well in the town as throughout the whole neighbouring hills, had filled the court to suffocation, and crowded the market-place with droves of strangers. The jealousy and aversion with which "the sheep-skin law" was, at that time, regarded in the Highlands, particularly that branch of it that took cognizance of matters, which were thought by a simple and warlike people to be the proper province of individuals themselves, to revenge or retaliate as they could, is hardly credible in times like our own, when we suffer sorely under the opposite evils; and hence, in the mountains, almost every man who got into its gripe, or was likely to be its victim, became the object of general interest, and of the pity even of those who had suffered most from his depredations. Nor was this feeling unnatural, from many circumstances, both on the side of the enforcers of the law and its breakers, which are already known to general readers. The chief of these, on the part of the mountaineers, was the jealousy, if not aversion, with which they regarded all things coming to them from the south; where they, on the other hand, were looked upon as half barbarians, who were to be

treated with that rigour and disregard of their prejudices, with which men conceited of their knowledge and refinement, think themselves at liberty to use those who cannot speak their own shibboleth; and who, in this case, trusted more to their swords, or a sort of natural justice, than to paper courts, which they considered as the very hot-beds of Lowland oppression, trick, and effeminacy. We are the more particular in intruding with these observations now, as, however well known, they apply strongly to a portion of our story yet to come, and of much more importance, both as a matter of history and an illustration of human nature, than this present trial, however that may be considering as serving to characterize the manners of the times.

The appearance of the prisoner, upon whom all eyes were now set, as he stood at the bar, was well calculated to increase the interest which many had felt for him from mere report. He seemed to be rather beyond fifty, stout and well formed, but of middle stature; he had the bold open look and roving eye of the free Gael; but the confinement which he had suffered, short as it had been, had already taken off a portion of that hardy hue, which his face usually bore from the air of the mountains.

While the indictment was reading, setting forth his several offences, Hector, who sat quite near him, observed him nod assent to the various charges, and say to himself, "It's a right tale;" but when any thing was read which appeared to him to misrepresent the truth, his brow knit into an expression, as if he could hardly restrain himself from pouncing upon the lawyer. But a bitter "Tam her for a lee-ing law," was all that this wrath was allowed to end in.

When the time drew near for asking him, according to the usual forms, his own verdict as to his guilt or innocence—the courts in those northern parts not being conducted with the dignity of ours in the south—several lawyers, and particularly that "loopy body," Willie Caption, before mentioned, got round him with various advices; and in particular urged him at least to let nothing come from his own mouth that might serve as an acknowledgment of the truth of the indictment.

"What for 'll she no tell the truth, and ban the lee," he said, "when her ain neck is in jeopardy, and when the auld men wi' the wigs hae come all the way frae Edinburgh to speer their speer? Joost let Duncan M'Naughton alane, an' no trouble her wi' ony bamboozlement, and she'll answer for hersel'."

"Prisoner, you have heard the indictment read," said

the judge; "are you guilty or not of the charges therein laid?"

"Does her lordship mean to speer if she's done the deeds that the man read from that lang paper?"

His lordship signified his assent.

"It's o'er true, my lord, saving the twa or three lees that's here and there."

"Prisoner, I have to caution you as to what answer you give to my question."

"Is she no to speak the truth?"

"The law does not call upon any man to criminate himself."

"What will the law have her to do? if it's her lordship's pleasure?"

"Be silent, and hear the issue of the trial."

"Oigh, her lordship doesna mean to hang her after all? God bless her auld wig?" and the simple Highlander leaned himself carelessly back against the boards which enclosed the bar.

"Prisoner, it will be necessary for you to say guilty, or not guilty, to these allegations."

"Say, not guilty," whispered Caption, the lawyer, speaking from behind.

"And what for wad she say that?"

"Because we'll may be get you off by the law."

"Tam her law! If she'll no get aff without the law, she'll ne'er try it, an' she should swing on the ugly woodie yet. Haud her whisht about the law, an' she'll joost say a word to the auld man wi' the tippet round her neck."

"Prisoner! your answer to the court."

"Weel, her nainsel joost did the misdeeds that the man read out o' that paper, and mony others forbye."

"Then you plead guilty?"

"She'll no plead nothing; but her nainsel will ne'er gie her tongue to tell an auld man a lee afore the peoples; for all that this vile body," and he turned round and thrust his finger almost into the eye of the lawyer, "tries to blaw in her lug."

"Silence in the court," cried the officer, to suppress the titter.

"You are aware," said the condescending judge, "that you are accused of hame-sucken and theft."

"I ken naething about the sooken; but did her lordship say a thief? she better mind her talk, afore she tell that to Duncan M'Naughton."

"Prisoner, I excuse your disrespect for the present; but

I wish to make you understand that you are accused of theft and cattle-lifting."

"Will her lordship speak that again? Does the law say that driving a score o' nolt frae the Lowlands, or herrying the hallan o' a fat Whig, wi' fire and sword, like a gentleman, is the wark o' a thief? Na—na—if her sainsel were a thief or a liar, she would deserve twa hangings instead o' ane. But Duncan M'Naughton may lift a hundre cattle frae a hill-side, or carry off a gude kist o' gear at night, for fear the moths might eat it, and may be gie a handfu' o' the siller to a puir wife to help her wi' her reat, as she passes, but ne'er would steal a tawtey sheep, like a Lowlander."

A buzz of approbation ran through the mountaineer spectators, who crowded the court, at this speech, so agreeable to their common prejudices; and the judges looked at each other and smiled, to find the true philosophy of robbery so well understood by a Highland cateran, and that with a humanity with which it is not always accompanied in higher places.

"You acknowledge, prisoner, to the principal charge—to wit, of entering the house of James Halliburton, with several of your men, and that with force of arms, carried contrary to law, and after putting the said Halliburton into great bodily fear, you——"

"Yes—tam her! and well she deserved it!" exclaimed M'Naughton, interrupting the judge, from delight at the thought; "and the body *was* in a deevil o' a fright, to be surely."

"Silence, prisoner!—and that, besides assaulting the said Halliburton with sundry beatings and bruises, you did carry off one clasped box, containing Spanish dollars, as set forth in the indictment."

"The 'dytment, say you? but does your 'dytment no tell what James Halliburton did to *me* and *mine*, lang before ever I crossed the water o' Earn?"

"No, that is not to the purpose."

"Then it's an ill law, and 'twill be the ruin o' the Highlands, whether I'm hang't or no."

"Prisoner, you are detaining the court. Have you any thing to say why judgment should not be passed upon you for these various crimes to which you have acknowledged, as well as your open riot in the streets of this city? I wish you had not spoken so freely; but I have not allowed this conversation to be recorded, and the law will allow you still to withdraw your confession."

"Will her vile law bid her again to speak the lee, after

all the ill she's done afore? Na, na! she'll tell the truth and shame the deevil, and the law baith, although she would hang for it this minute, and her puir wife sitting at hame greeting for her, nae doubt."

The stout Cearnach then made an ample and almost noble confession of all his principal reiving adventures, to most of which he had been either stimulated by the usages of his countrymen, or impelled by some strong provocation; and whenever he came to a place wherein he or his men had acted with aught like oppression or wantonness, he uttered, in the best English he could command, a strong invective against himself for giving way to passions which he averred he could not always control. "But," said he, finding himself at a loss, "if hersel had good English, she would just speak another spoke yet."

"Go on, prisoner. The court will excuse the peculiarities of your language, from the seriousness of the circumstances in which you now stand."

"It's no' for hersel she would speak," said the criminal, struck, if not affected, by the last allusion; "but she has as braw a family at hame as ever sat round a fire, and a daughter that, suppose her father say it, there's few to match frae Lorn to Lochaber; and a son that can wield his father's sword without his father's wayward passions. May be he's here this very day—och, och! there he is!" and the delinquent clapped his two hands on his eyes from emotion at the sight: "come forward, Farquhar, my man, and countenance your father at this time of trouble. Dinna be blate afore their lordships, for ye're weel worth to look pny man in the face; and if ye're no ashamed o' me this day, may be ye'll help to save me from the gruesome gallows."

The eyes of all were now turned to the quarter to which he pointed; and room being made by the crowd, what was Hector's surprise to see the same youth who had been his teacher of the broadsword exercise, come forward, and make a modest bow to the judges.

"Now, if you will allow me another word," said the prisoner. "This young man's mother, who has been the cause, although she was the opposer, of my lifting practices; and who, when I took her at first afore the priest, was as like this youth as a pretty woman may be like a man; ay, she told me, even when I brought hame the beasts or the gear, that I would come to an ill end, and begged me, wi' tears, to stay at hame, and be content wi' our poor bit land in Breadalbane, and saying, that she and hers would be weel content wi' nothing but a short gown and a sheiling, rather than that I should put my neck in the power of the law.

But I kend that for all that she was a proud woman, and couldna bear to want a bit and a sip to give to the stranger as they passed our door; and my father being ruined after Mar lost the fifteen, I just thought I would tak revenge o' the worl', that had 'poverished me and mine. But now, my lorda, as it's come to a stand wi' me, and I've been cooped up between four wa's sae long, and the ministers hae talked to me about faith and gude works, I'm determined, if I can get over this mishanter, to lead a new life, and stick to my hungry farm amang the hills. So, wi' your permission, my propose is this, that if you gie me a pardonment, and let me ance mair put my feet on the heather, I'll do mair to keep down the limmers o' Perthshire, than a' the red soldiers that ever set themselves up for a mark to be shot at by the lads ahint the bushes; and for token, here's my son, Farquhar, that's ready to take the oath to King George, and to guard the hills frae the like o' what I hae been mysel, as a tested soldier o' the Black Watch now gathering upon the bonnie holms of Breadalbane. Now I've said my say, and God gie your lordships a gude opinion o' the repentant Cearnach."

Notwithstanding the imperfection of the dialect, there was a dignity in the bearing, and a pathos in the tone of the criminal, standing, as he now did, between life and death, that, along with the expressive looks of the youth, who stood facing the judges, melted into tears the great bulk of the crowded auditory. Both father and son stood straining their eyes upon those who held their fate in their hands; but no answer was returned to this appeal: and, after some forms, a verdict of guilty having been instantly returned by the jury, agreeably to direction, the judge consulted a moment with the magistrates of Perth; but the shakings of the head and serious looks by which this was met, gave pretty certain indication of what was to follow.

"Prisoner," said the judge, "to the latter part of your speech, I can make no answer. What you have stated, can be of no avail here, nor, I fear, any where else, from what I learn from the magistrates present. My duty, then, and your doom, is already laid down *by the law*."

"Unfortunate auld carle," said the prisoner, almost forgetting his own distress for a moment, as he looked at the judge; "so ye canna hae mercy on a puir sinner, for that vile pinch-craig, the law. I wish ye had been bred to a better trade; but if I had you on the hills for a year, I would just put a claymore in your hand, and teach you an inkling o' common sense."

The gravity of the court was again somewhat disturbed

by this outbreking, when a single look on the ghastly face of his disappointed son, restored the mountaineer, bold as he was, to a full sense of his unhappy situation. He said nothing, however, while the judge calmly, yet with evident feeling, put on his hat, and in a voice that thrilled through the court, pronounced the fatal words of condemnation to the cord—at which the young man fainted, and fell back into the arms of the people below the bars.

"Weel," said the criminal, after the confusion caused by this affair had somewhat subsided, "since it *maun* be sae, ye needna hae said mickle about it, to gar my poor bairn swarf at my feet. I've seen as gude a fallow as stands here, shot to the death on a hill-side, and ne'er a ane to put on a bonnet about it, or to say, a Lord hae mercy to him's sowl. But I'll die for the law, as mony a good chield has done afore me, when a piobrach lament played for him at the foot of the gallows tree. Huish! Almighty me! what's that? I thought I was to get back to my black hole in peace, to prepare me for death."

What caused the last hasty exclamation, was a noise which equally startled the solemn feelings of the auditory, and those of him who was the subject of it; for in the loud scream of a woman's tongue, near the door, Duncan easily recognised the voice of his own favourite daughter. Another shriek followed the former, when, pressing through the crowd, with dishevelled hair, and ghastly countenance, the maiden obtained the first sight of her unfortunate father, as, with hands stretched over the railing of the bar, he watched the frightful agony of his child.

While the unhappy girl threw herself into the arms of her brother, and unable to get near her parent, cast herself on her knees at the foot of the judges' bench, and, tearing her hair, as she tried to speak, at length screamed forth prayers that her father's life might be spared,—the utmost efforts of the officers of the court were scarcely sufficient to keep the compassionate excitement of the by-standers within such bounds as were consistent with the safety of their lordships, and the security of the new victim of the law.

This state of things could not be suffered. The whole court was in a tumult. "Remove the prisoner!" cried the judge, in a voice of thunder—"and close the doors of the court-house!"

In the midst of the confusion the prisoner was hurried away, and the screams of the young woman, praying in vain for mercy for her father, were the last sounds he heard, as, much unmanned, he was carried through the murky passages, towards the condemned cell of the prison.

CHAPTER VII.

My merryemen's lives, my widowe's teirs—
 There lies the pang that pinches me;
 When I am straight in bludie eard,
 Yon castell will be right dreirie.

SANG OF THE OUTLAW, MURRAY.

"It's gaun to be a bad job this, deacon," said baillie M'Farlane to the burgess, one evening, some days after the trial, as they sat discoursing alone on the affair of the escape. "I wish I had my hands weel washed o't, for auld Watty Hewit, the jailor, is as dour as the whinstane, and the turnkeys maunna be spoken to by me on ony sic a business. Ye ken that it's as mickle as my character's worth, forbye the prospect o' the provostship."

"It's weel enough for you to speak that way, baillie," said M'Vey, stiffly, "so as to throw the heavy end o' the concern on my shoulders, but Evan M'Evan knows my disposition and your power, and he'll never speer whether you are likely to get to the provost or no, if Duncan M'Naughton swings in the woodie."

"What do you think we'll do, burgess! This is a deevil o' a scrape for a 'sponsible man like me to be into."

"And Evan of Breadalbane is a man of his word."

"Faith, so he is, and the clansmen are sae used to his their ain way in thae cases, in spite o' the powers of law and justice, whilk it's my duty to maintain, that I fear the very worst, if we shouldna be able to get this Cearnach out o' the rape. There was auld baillie Frazer, of Inverness, wha was set upon by the clansmen frae the hills, just as Glenmore set upon me, and he behov'd to let lang Dawney Frazer slip the rape, though as great a limmer as ever drew a dirk, just because he was a Frazer too, and maun to be saved to be sure, for the honour o' the clan."

"But you have more virtue than the Inverness baillie, that's evident," said the burgess, slyly.

"Ye need na sneer at me, deacon. Ye ken brawly how

I am situate; and if the jail o' Perth were as rotten a ruckle o' stanes, as the auld tolbooth o' Inverness, whilk is eaten up by the rattons, through and through, Duncan M'Naughton would make a hole for himsel, as well as the sensible brutes; and if he wanted a wee bit claw of cauld iron to pick his way, some hand may be found to slip into a loaf of his bread, a rusty nail or a bit whorl augur, or may be the spring o' a watch, to cut the stancheons, and naebody would ever be a hair the wiser."

"And why don't you try it as it is, since the powers that be, as you say, resist every application for mercy to this doubtful criminal."

"First," answered the baillie, "because it's a very unlikely affair for M'Naughton to get out of sae kittle and sae strong a place, considering the many doors and locks; and, second, because, being a magistrate o' the town myself, I canna be seen to lend a finger to sic a business, having no one that I could trust to do the job, unless I run to some o' the breechless lads frae the hills, the whilk we know would be a ruination. But now, deacon, ye are not won the height o' the magistracy, yet, as I have. What should hinder you to try your hand wi' something o' the sort, as ye are in the link o' the fear of Glenmore, as weel as I am, and would be less likely to be suspected than me, a public functionary?"

"I wish you would not throw your eternal functionaryship so much in my teeth, baillie," said M'Vey, beginning to lose patience. "But, as to this business, although I am no friend to countervailing the laws in any ordinary case, I feel so much interested for the fate of this man, especially since I have become aware of the injudicious resolutions in a high quarter in favour of severe measures; being, moreover, of opinion that it is not reasonable to take a man's life for merely lifting a penny of worldly gear, or for driving a few stots or steers off the braes, belonging to them that hae something left behind—I tell you, that independent of the wishes of Glenmore, I am determined to try what I can do for this unfortunate gentleman, in the old-fashioned manner of a bodily escape by door or window; and in this plan I have hit upon an agent who is little likely to bring suspicion upon either you or I."

"Have ye sae?" said the baillie, rubbing his hands in ecstasy. "Odd, Deacon, I aye thought you a clever man, an ye hae quite removed a weight from my conscience. What is't? just let me into your plan; and if we can only keep it snug frae my brethren, the town baillies, I'll lend

a secret and a sure hand to farther the business. But whisht!—softly—here's a knocking at the door."

"It's only Hector, my doucy young friend, and the trusty agent I've just spoken of," said the deacon. "Come away, my man, and tell us how you've sped in the auld tolbooth. I dare say ye were more sure to find the poor Cearnach at hame, than if ye had gan to seek him on a highland hill."

"He was not far to seek, indeed," said Hector, coming forward, his countenance bearing evident marks of the impression which the scene he had just witnessed had made on his feelings. "The trial of the hardy reiver was affecting enough," continued the youth; "but to see a brave auld man chained by the leg like a dog, to a great iron bar rooved into the floor of his dungeon, and appointed to die e'er six days come and go, was to me a sight which I shall not easily forget."

"This was not a job for one so young as you, when I come to think o't," said the deacon, half to himself; "but tell me, Hector, how did the poor man look, and what did he say to you? Be particular, and withhold nothing."

"As for his look, sir, it was as firm and bold as when he struck down the red-coats at the town's cross. But it's well to be seen that the air of a cell in the Perth jail is not so pure as the breeze that blows from the top of Beavorlich; and neither a mountain man nor a mountain hind could be expected to live long chained by the leg in a stone cage. Yet the old man seems to bend more under the weight of his solitary thoughts, than the fetters that so bitterly resist the activity of his manly limbs, although the usual effects of his awful situation are too evident on his countenance to be altogether concealed."

"God keep us! 'tis a sad situation, no doubt," said the benevolent deacon, "but you gave him some comfort. Hasten and inform us."

Hector went on with particulars, but he did not fully tell with what feelings of reluctance, if not humiliation, he drew from his sleeve, and exhibited to the condemned man, some small articles with which he contrived to elude the vigilance of the jailor in aid of his intended escape.

"What's tat?" said the Cearnach, as Hector offered the instruments, he surveying them at the same time with a bewildered and suspicious look.

With a half-guilty hesitation, Hector tried an explanation. No sooner, however, had M'Naughton understood his meaning, than he pushed the articles from him with a con-

tempt that made our youth blush with shame for his commission.

"Does the Perth bodices send their weavers' wimbles and their tailors' bodkins to me?" said he, drawing back the whole stretch of his chain. "Deevil! they little ken Duncan M'Naughton. Na, na, youngster! gang back and tell your chapman bailties, that if the auld reiver o' the hills canna win her way out at the door as she came in, wi' a stroke o' fair manliness, and the strength o' her arm, she'll see'try to pick her way out o' a Lowland jail wi' a bodkin, or grub anoth the ground like a mowdiwart; but she'll aether knock her way out like a shentleman, or she'll die for the law, as her betters did afore her."

"But life is sweet, Mr. M'Naughton," said Hector, more and more anxious for the magnanimous condemned; and it's a sad thing for a Highland gentleman to die by the tow, like a Lowland fellow. Listen to me, sir," added the youth, seeing his advantage in appealing to the deep-rooted pride of a Highlander—"could you only get your foot once more on the heath of Breadalbane, where your friends and kins would receive you with shouts that would make the glens wring again—one day, but one glorious day spent as you were wont on your own braes, tracking the deer in the forests of Athol, or shooting the capercailzie on the cliffs of Cairntoul, would be worth any effort or any fancied degradation in freeing yourself from a dog's death, and the weary solitude of this dungeon. And then, sir—nay, I will speak it—think of sweet life, and the look of the blessed sun on your own braes—and of a wife's embrace, could you return to her once more from death and doom!—and of a daughter's sob of joy on your bosom—and of a son's hope, and the flush of his eye, as he prepares to follow you again to the mountains!—think—think of all this!"

No sooner had our youth given vent to his warm feelings in this enthusiastic manner, than he found his neck grasped, as he described it, with the grip of a tiger, in the strong fingers of the Cearnach, into whose cheeks the pallid blood had gradually mounted with the climax of Hector's speech, until his eyes seemed ready to start out of his head with a terrific excitement.

"What have I done to you or your friends, boy," he said, in a tone that was harrowingly pathetic, "that you should thus come into the black hole of the law, to trouble the resignation of a doomed man? Is not my day almost at hand? Are not my thoughts in the grave, and among the spectres and shadows of the gospeller's world, where my fathers

dwelt from the days of the Fingallians! And you would disturb her weary thoughts wi' talk o' the hills that she'll ne'er see again; and the wife, and the bairns that she daur-nee think of! and that shall hae to tell, when she's dead and gane, that their auld father was hangit like a dog, at the town-cross o' Perth. Ochoh! ochon! laddie, that thou should see her greet!" and the unhappy condemned turned his angry grasp into an embrace, and sobbed aloud on the youth's shoulder.

An exchange of forgiveness passed between them as soon as the condemned had a little recovered his tranquillity; but to any farther urging upon the point that Hector had come about, he replied, after a long and bitter struggle against the weakness of nature, with the same stern contempt which he had formerly done to the quirky suggestions of Captior the lawyer; adding, however, that if he only had a loose leg, even where he was, and a claymore in his belt to give him confidence, he "would not die the death yet, at least without a bit brulzie, wi' the jailor men, and other o' the scabbed eollies o' the law."

Thus it appeared that every plan suggested by the worthy citizens was defeated by the peculiar prejudices and disposition of the criminal; and yet did they dread the ultimate event, for more reasons than we have space to enumerate, although now they separated without coming to any conclusion.

Time passed on, and the day of doom drew nigh, when one night Hector, returning from going on a message, begged with much anxiety of manner to be allowed to absent himself for that evening. The readiness with which he obtained the consent of the kind-hearted burgess, and the expressions of confidence in his prudence with which it was accompanied, affected the youth almost to tears; and taking his master's hand, and thanking him fervently for all his kindness, his manner seemed so peculiar as to induce inquiry as to the cause of his evident emotion.

"There's something on your mind, Hector," said the burgess, "for I see your eye kindle with some present purpose. Unfold it to me, that it may be well with you; youth is the better for the counsel of an auld head."

The youth, however, seemed too much affected to be pressed for a reply, farther than to beg to be excused from the formality of counsel, which he foresaw, would have no effect, if contrary to his purpose; and wringing his master's hands, he took his leave. Before he had got three steps from the door, however, returning hastily back, he said that

a foreboding was on his mind that something might happen to him in his intended adventure, or at least, that he might be prevented from returning to his duty in the morning. Should that be the case, or should he be obliged in any way to leave his generous friend for a time, he begged to know how far he might count, if not upon his consent, at least on his forgiveness; as he would not willingly run the hazard of being counted an ingrate by so true a benefactor.

The good burgess, suppressing his present feelings of alarm or reluctance, expressed his full trust in the youth's own prudence, gave his consent to any change which might arise from the best exercise of that quality, and, aware of Hector's secret propensity for the free life of the mountains, assured him of his future friendship. He even insisted upon his putting in his pocket the wages that were due to him, as a necessary preparative to whatever event might be the issue of what he was about to attempt. This done, Hector and his master parted a second time, and with feelings of uncertainty, yet of dogged resolution, he set off towards another part of the town.

CHAPTER VIII.

O Jockie Hall stepp'd to the door;
 And he bended low back his knee;
 And he made the bolts, the door hang on,
 Loup frae the wa' right wantonlie.
 Yestreen I was your prisoner,
 But now this morning am I free.

SCOTCH BALLAD.

If any portion of life may be considered as a series of chances, to use one mode of expression, that portion is youth, with its prepared circumstances, in which the individual can take no part, and its thick-coming impressions to affect his after life, over which he has, indeed, little control. As Hector moved down the narrow street, he wondered internally why he should have engaged himself so deeply in the fate of mere strangers, or have been so impressed in favour of one, who, in no respect, had commended himself to the estimation of the world. He did not then know how much sympathy is a component part of the noblest natures, or how much juxta-position, in all circumstances, may happen to bring out that sympathy. Unaware, also, of the precise tendencies of his own character, his mind only sought the exercise and activity of the most urgent of his faculties, with little regard to the world's opinion, of those to whom the great disposer, juxta-position, happened to introduce him. A neglected orphan, and the victim of necessity, where could fortune throw him but among the obscure sons of lower life, perhaps in the poor townships of Scotland, whose simple joys few delight in contemplating, and to whose many sorrows the high-born or the luxurious can afford but little sympathy.

Feeling discontent growing upon him even in the comfortable keeping of a burgher of Perth, what did it signify to him—a floating windfall of the world's chances—through whose means he got into more congenial circumstances, provided his sympathies were, in the mean time, interested?

and, while he found agreeable employment for his own activity, was able to do what he considered a good for some other human being, which would give an inward satisfaction to his mind?

Entering a house as he went along, and proceeding up a narrow stair, as he pondered in this manner, upon opening a door a scene presented itself within, which might well interest the most callous feelings. It was the wife and family of the man who, in two days hence, was appointed for execution. The whole were assembled, and waiting for Hector's coming with the most intense impatience. There was the Cearnach's wife, still a handsome woman, and evidently of higher breeding than himself, though now almost wasted to a skeleton with despairing anxiety. Next was his daughter, a pretty Highland girl, the same who appeared with such distracted passion on the day of the trial, and now in a worse state, if possible, than her mother—with the son, who originally taught Hector the broad-sword exercise, now burning with impatience for a last trial for his father, and busy in exerting himself to the utmost to support the sinking spirits of the rest. Besides these, there were two younger girls, who, by their sobs and afflicting language, added to the effect of the whole scene, and gave Hector a fearful impression of the sufferings of a family whose parent was doomed to public immolation. They crowded round him on his entrance, and embracing him, some even on their knees, invoked Heaven in his favour as their only hope; and, knowing also that the attempt they were now ready for, if unsuccessful, would be likely to add the son, and present staff of the family, to the destruction already prepared for the father, the parting from him, on this important night, formed altogether a scene which may well be spared the reader.

Having torn themselves from the family, when the two young men came to the front of the prison, they perceived with concern that the guard without had been doubled, and that there was every symptom of unusual vigilance on the part of the military, as if some such attempt as their own was already expected. They stood some minutes in the shade of the rugged buttress of an ancient building, which then nearly faced the prison; and consulted together as to what they should do, in consequence of the additional difficulties presented by this circumstance. They had little time for talk, however, for the hour of changing the turnkeys for the night was fast approaching; and upon the advantage to be taken of that moment depended all their hopes of success.

"Are you sure," said Hector to his young friend, "that Donald has got inside?"

"I am confident he must," replied Farquhar, "else we should have found him here. God grant that he and others were well outside again! But who can that be in the cocked hat and great coat, peering about under the corner?"

"Confound it!" exclaimed Hector, after looking out for a moment, "it is that long, lean officer that I had the tussle with at the skirmish when your father was taken. If he has the command for the night, as seems to be the case, our exploit is almost desperate."

"Surely," said Farquhar, bitterly, "I am the very plaything of ill-luck! for, had I suspected this, I could as easily have had half-a-dozen stout fellows at the corner of the street to assist us, as my tongue could have spoken the word."

"Hush, in that strain!" said Hector, boldly; "fear is a coward born, and we must know neither this night. Stand close where you are—keep your weapon ready for the hand, and your eyes fixed on that black door. Now bid me God speed!"

Hector, who, in his civilian dress, and known as the *doer* of the burgess, had, through his master's interest, obtained the unquestioned *entrée* to the prisoner, was admitted without difficulty; but this evening his person was subjected to a search, more strict than he had ever known it. Having passed this ordeal, as he now followed one of the low functionaries of punishment through the crooked passages, groping every where about for an expected object, his hand lighted among the thick hair of a bushy head, which he gladly recognised as that of the trusty Donald, Glenmore's servant, and the same who had originally acted his part so well in the care of the burgess's shop, crouched down in one of the darkest nooks of the irregular corridor. Catching a handful of the man's coarse hair as he passed, Hector gave it a pull, to show his confidence. In return for this freedom, however, he received from the Highlander such a squeeze in the thick of the leg with the mountainous sinewy hand, as almost endangered the whole adventure, by the difficulty he found in preventing himself from screaming out with the pain.

At length they emerged into the small inner court, out of which opened a low door, by which admission was gained to the condemned cell, and in front of which a sentinel was posted. As the key was turning in the lock, Hector thought he observed the watchful red-coat glare upon him with a suspicious look. He, however, took no notice, and, in ano-

ther instant, found himself in the presence of the object of his adventure.

"Are we not to be left alone, friend?" said the unfortunate man to the turnkey functionary, who still stood with his hand on the lock of the inner door.

"No," said the man, "it's the orders that I wait inside."

A look was now exchanged between Hector and the Cearnach; when the latter, taking the youth in his arms, and putting his mouth to his ear, a few earnest words of whispering conversation passed between them; after which, giving him a gentle push against the turnkey, he shook his leg to show that in that respect he was already free, and, in another instant, by a sudden effort, the keys were wrested from the hands of the paralyzed servant of the law, and the bold mountaineer was already on the outside of the first door.

"Dinna kill a puir body, and just keep her nain counsel," whispered the man, hastily, to Hector, as he found himself in the youth's grasp. "Do you think her nainsel has ony pleasure in seeing his honour hangit? Lock her in, ye deevil, and take care o' the red sodger."

Scarcely were the words spoken, ere the man was enclosed in the cell; next, the second door was opened, and, in another instant, the sentinel who stood without, was pounced upon by the athletic Cearnach. While Hector opened the other doors in the passage, the active Highlander continued to grapple with the Englishman, who seemed extremely unwilling to part with the musket which M'Naughton endeavoured to wrest out of his hand. The shout which the surprised sentinel set up while thus engaged, aroused the attention of the other functionaries to what was going forward; but as they ran to their posts, on finding Hector engaged in opening the doors, out sprung, from his concealment, the bear-like Donald, and catching one of them in his arms, while Hector made a dart at the other, who held the keys of the outer door, all became engaged in a furious encounter; though entirely without weapons, save the heavy keys, and a single bayonet, now in the hands of the Cearnach. In a few minutes they had mastered, as well the functionaries as several hangers-on who lounged in the outer lobby, and the last door being opened by Hector, they attempted to get out into the street.

By this time, however, the unusual noise having reached the ears of the sentinels, their pieces were presented at the breasts of those who would have issued from the prison, while, as the latter undauntedly sprang upon the muskets, the astounding cry of "Guard, turn out!" gave a note of

startling alarm down the silent street, and struck to their hearts the chilling dread that all might yet be lost by this hated interference. Fortunately, at this instant, the presence of mind of the younger M'Naughton, who had been watching behind the buttress, created an unexpected diversion in favour of the adventurers; for, running across the street towards the guard-house, he feigned to attack the sentinel placed near the door of the old building where the red soldiers rested. By this timely movement, he diverted, for some time, the attention of those who were called out by the cry for the guard, and they crowded round him, instead of flying to where his father and friends grappled with the others. He thus gave the adventurers time to strike down every one who opposed them; and to get off clear, even amidst the group of townsmen, who, by this time, were fast assembling on the spot. The tall officer in the coat, however, was the first to perceive the trick, and, running forward, was just in time to encounter Hector, who, from circumstances, was the last to make his way after the others. With a triumphant exclamation of recognition, the subaltern made a spring upon our youth; but, knowing the danger of any farther tumult, and the prudence of a clean pair of heels after being so far successful, Hector, by a jerk of wrestling strength, effected his freedom from the partial grasp of the Englishman, and was off in an instant down the main street of Perth.

As the mountaineer and his son, now foremost, turned down a narrow street to avoid the publicity which they were gradually obtaining, a scream of joy was set up by several females who had been watching for them, among which the loud blessings and prayers of his wife and daughter, uttered in Gaelic, struck Hector's ear, as he passed out of the Water Gate, and, crossing the long bridge of Perth, in a few minutes the whole, starting off the common road, found their feet on the soft sod of the rich carse of Strathmore.

When the joyful little party had left behind them the hoary turrets of the ancient palace of Scone, which M'Naughton himself almost looked upon with regret, as reminding him of a dynasty of Scottish kings, now banished, perhaps for ever, from their own realms, he thought of the sad end from which he had just been rescued; and stopping to look back on the distant steeples of Perth, now hardly seen by the starlight, he embraced first his son, and then Hector, and that not without tears; pouring out upon the latter every blessing for his deliverance which his gratitude

could suggest, or the warm heart of a Highlander find expression for.

"And och," said he, "my braw young man, if you would but just come with us to the hills, where the black cock breeds, instead of spending your life in a smoky town, over the carking cares o' the Lowlander—if there's a clean firelock in a' Breadalbane, to bring down the deer on the mountains, it shall be yours; and if there's a sharp blade to be had, ye shall wear it on your thigh. Then come with us, my lad!—come and see me hame; and if there's a gude bit or sip to be had on the hills, it shall be offered you; or a warm corner in Duncan M'Naughton's hallan, there ye shall sleep when ye come wearied frae the mountains; for the repentant Cearnach will ne'er forget them that saved him frae the woodie."

Though Hector could not but feel serious at the thoughts of leaving entirely the good burgess of Perth, yet, considering that he had been fully recognised as "actor, art and part," in the adventures of this night, the danger of return left him no alternative; although also he could have wished to commence any new career in better company, yet, like most youths, he went forth now again, very much on chance, to see what farther turns of fortune time would open out.

CHAPTER IX.

Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,
 O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreary wastes they sought
 The upland muirs, where rivers, there but brooks,
 Depart to different seas.

In solitudes like these,
 Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foiled
 A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws.

GRAHAM.

TRAVELLING in the dark, even over ground where our adventurers had neither road nor path to follow, and where the partial twinkle of the dim stars above was often obscured by the hazy atmosphere of the north, was neither novelty nor hardship to Hector, young as he was, far less was it so to a hardy cateran flying for his life from the dreaded fangs of the law. Proceeding for a space along the banks of the Almond, they had no other way of getting across it, but by plunging into its black waters, at a ford beneath the towers of Methven castle, and passing, in the dark, the grounds of Logie-Almond, midnight was not long past until they found themselves in the great valley of Glenshee. By the time, however, that they got into the celebrated Birnam Forest, to the south of Dunkeld, they fairly lost all knowledge of the way they ought to pursue, among the irregular hills of Strathbran, and Hector's limbs beginning to weary, they agreed to indulge themselves with an hour's rest in a tempting nook that presented itself in the lee of the mountain.

No untoward accident disturbing their slumbers, the cheering light of a new day early found them again pushing on their way through the winding valley of the Braan, and striking down to the left for fear of any danger of pursuit, passing the small lake of Loch Frenchie, and climbing hills, and winding through passes and corries, before the

evening had lengthened the shadows of the hills, their sight was gladdened with a near view of the noble Benlawers, with the long sweep of Loch Tay winding at its foot. In this journey, Highland hospitality procured the travellers ready support; and on the day following, crossing the Dochart at the head of the lake, through the then secluded hamlet of Killin, the Cearnach ultimately sought effectual concealment, as well as his home and his people, by plunging into the impressive wilds of northern Breadalbane.

The sensations of Hector throughout this mountain journey—through some of the noblest scenery of Scotland—were often such as language does not compass the idea of, but which imaginative youth *feels* when first introduced into the presence of nature's sublimest scenes; and which sometimes makes even age itself almost drunk with the contemplation of grandeur and of beauty. Green glens winding deep among the mountains, whose towering peaks made the eye giddy to look upon them—thick woods of the dark Scots fir, or the larch and the sycamore, scattering themselves in picturesque masses over the broken declivities and wild irregularities which constitute a Highland forest, and into whose unknown recesses the young imagination shoots with a pleasing terror—rumbling cascades and boiling caldrons, into which the enthusiast himself almost fears to look; with clear lines of the mountain pools, so limpid that the clouds of heaven seemed to have come down into, and to linger in their still waters. Occasionally, also, our travellers encountered broad lakes in the hollows, so smooth and so silent, that the whisper of poetry which they excited, seemed to retire into the heart, and Echo herself appeared to have fled away into caves unseen, and to speak only among the stooping rocks over the waterfall. Such scenes as these, with a plentiful mixture of bald hills, conveying no image but that of storm and sterility, and long flats of blue heath, out of which fancy itself could extract nothing cheering, and whose dreary solitude the wild cry of the brooding curlew could hardly make more melancholy, formed an impressive variety on this interesting journey.

At length the pace of our travellers became less rapid, and the thoughts of the Cearnach less anxious; and as they drew near to the scenes which the latter knew so well, the whole frequently rested to give Hector time to enjoy the surrounding prospect.

"Clorics and praises! what a pleasurement it 'll be, to find the smell o' her nam hills again," said shockheaded

Donald, snuffing up the east wind like a mountain goat, as they seated themselves on the soft heath of a hill, whose surmounted ridge had just opened to them the lakes and woods around. "I wonder what wad tempt her again to put her brogued feet on the hard stanes o' the Lowlands, for naething ava but to get her head in a trouble, or her neck in a rape."

"I would commend you to take care of your own neck, my friend, and never to speak of auld tales in the hills," said young M'Naughton, not at all pleased at this allusion to the misfortune of his father.

"Oigh, she needna be sae short, I'm thinking for a' her devil joke," said the Highlander, "if the auld law were here, wi' spectacles on her nose, she would, may be, see mair fuerlies on the braes o' Breadalbane, than she would on the four cornered plainstanes o' Perth."

"I would just like to see either beagle or baillie, read his parchment law among the black faced wedders on this hill-side," said the Cearnach, "he would, may be, need as many red soldiers as would man the wa's o' Fort William, to fetch him back again to Tayside, wi' a hale skin."

"If there's not the *seidar fearag* to keep up the law," said his son, "there'll be the *seidar dhu* to the Whig's bidding, and that'll be little better."

"What mean you, boy?"

"Ou just the Black Watch. Have ye not heard that they hae been trysted to a great gathering in Glenlyon, or about the ballach o' Loch Tay, and a' the best lads and duenewasles in Breadalbane hae joined them. So the hail country's to be scoured frae Kilsyth to Kildrummy, and no Cearnach chield need try to row the tail o' a stot, that has ever cropped a mouthfu' grass in the Lowlands."

"So much the better, Farquhar," said the elder man, demurely, as Hector listened attentively to this conversation. "Though I dinna like the law that takes from the poor to heap on the rich, and fill the pouches o' the lawyers, yet I ken I hae been doing wrong mysel, in many a deed; and now, as I have, by God's forbearance, gotten a loose leg, and my feet once more on the hills o' Breadalbane, if the law only lets me alane to dig my ain peats in bonny Glendochart, I'll keep my word to the auld Lord wi' the tippet, that condemned me to the tow in the court-house o' Perth, and stirke nor steer, stot nor gelding, shall I ever drive again frae another man's hill."

"Say you so, father! say you so! God be thanked!" exclaimed the son, starting to his feet, and the embrace that

followed between father and son, formed in the observing eyes of Hector, an impressive testimony to the happiness derived from virtuous resolutions.

"Whether shall we make first for Evan M'Evan's castle," rejoined the youth, "or shall we proceed on to our own home in Glendochart?"

"I for one," said Hector, "am anxious to see the noble chief that invited me so kindly to his castle in the Highlands."

"Surely the sheentlemans duinhewassels," said Dougald, now striking in, "will not gae by the door o' the great Evan M'Evan, for a purr ten mlie, after she's come sae far. If she offered to put upon his honour the laird sic an affront, wha kens but he would take the duinhewassels up, and hang them for a treason at his own door-cheek, just to learn her manners, after she helped her gae weel out o' the woodie in the Lowlands!"

Both M'Naughton and his son saw the propriety of attending to this suggestion, and Hector strongly seconding the proposition, our travellers were about to rise and proceed, when their attention was arrested by the loud report of a musket, quite near, and seeming to proceed from a clump of brushwood which skirted the side of the hill on which they sat, and was then pleasantly repeated in many echoes, away among the recesses of the neighbouring mountains.

Starting forward to see what company was so near, Hector soon perceived, proceeding from behind the brushwood, two tall young Highlandmen of no common appearance, each carrying a long Spanish gun, and followed by a gilly attendant, descending the hill towards them.

A shout of joyful recognition was set up by the strangers on observing M'Naughton; and as both parties embraced, soon after, with all the warmth of mountaineer friendship, the involuntary cry of "The M'Phersons! the M'Phersons!" set up by their own gilly, Donald, while running forward, gave Hector intimation of the names of those new acquaintances.

"And haw is this!" said M'Naughton, after the preliminary greetings had passed, as he surveyed the persons of the youthful strangers; "gun and pistol, biodeg and skenocle, as if General Wade had ne'er come from the south, to take from us the arms that our fathers wore! Here we are in the heart o' the Highlands, and yet you are armed to the teeth, as if Charlie himself had set up his standard on the hills o' Broadalbane."

The brothers looked at each other as if some secret were between them, which they were ashamed to reveal to the sturdy Cearnach. At last, one of them, as if disdaining the idea of any concealment, boldly said,

"You know, Duncan M'Naughton, that we're neither Whigs to a southland laird nor traitors to our auld king, if he were here, and able to keep his chair; but it does not do for young men to linger idle on the hills, nor for men of peace to stand in the face of the law—if only a few of them were made for our good; nor can we bear to part with the arms which it is our pride to wield; so as times have changed and bid us to follow, we have just given our promise to the gallant Lochnell to take King George's money, and do his bidding, (on our ain hills and no farther,) as gentlemen corporals in the Black Watch—for that is our highest commission until promoted to a better."

"Then my resolve is a good one, and times *have* changed, indeed," said the old man, "and all I can say is, if the new Black Watch is to be made up of such men as you, it will be a braw sight to see it ranged out on the cairn of Strathmore."

Our hero being now introduced, and various explanations taking place among all, the interest these young men took in their new acquaintance, as well as the remarkable escape of their old friend, the Cearnach, would on no account allow the farther proceeding of the travellers, without first turning aside to taste the hospitality of Corrie-vrin, the neighbouring residence of the M'Phersons. Hector also foreseeing some intimacy hereafter between himself and these engaging strangers, the whole now descending the hill in high spirits, were soon in sight of the pleasant hollow beneath the mountains which had been pointed out under the appellation of Corrie-vrin.

As Hector drew near, so as to have a full view of the indicated spot, the appearance of the whole, particularly the house, or rather ruined tower, or castle, inhabited by the young strangers, might well surprise him, as the residence of men who condescended to act as corporals in the Black Watch; ignorant, as he then was, that almost the whole, even of the rank and file of that famous regiment, was originally composed of men, who, among their own people at least, held the rank of gentlemen, and that many were even the scions of the most ancient families, which the wayward chances of internal broil or mistaken patriotism were fast bringing to poverty or extinction. The situation of Corrie-vrin was as peculiar as its character. It was a level hollow of brilliant

verdure, contrasted with bleak mountains which rose wild and sterile beyond it. Bounded regularly on each side, this secluded flat took the form of an elongated angle, or round-bottomed pyramid laid on its side, the wide and circular end rising from the bottom of the hollow in rocky terraces, which wound like belts round the dell, and the narrow outlet sweeping away out till it terminated in a broken streamlet, which, babbling among rocks and steep-sinking banks without, where the wild cat and the badger were often hunted with success, gathered itself into a delicious pool or lake of clear fishing water, about a mile below the ancient building.

Descending into the hollow, by playfully springing down the terraces, with the wild pride, in their agility, and hilarious enthusiasm, of mountaineers, the company now all together numbering eight persons, including the gilly, soon got their feet on the verdure beneath, and proceeded on in front of the ancient habitation of Corrie-vrin.

The building itself, as Hector could now see it, presented that mixed semblance of the castellated and the lowly, which so well corresponded with the simple Highland character. A round tower of square-shapen stone, evidently of great antiquity, and probably of Danish origin, formed its most prominent object; and though at present but little used by the inmates, excepting as a sort of outer hall or upper retiring place, gave at least a picturesque effect to the meaner buildings beneath, which it both adorned and overlooked. A small platform below, in front of the tower, terminating in a rude gate of massive elm tree, showed a quaint attempt at minor magnificence, in the castellated taste; and a few stunted fruit trees and pointed larches in the rear, rising out of an ample plot of Scots green kail, supplied the place of the more substantial corn-stacks of the south, and illustrated as well the poverty as the habits of the inmates.

A hale and handsome matron received her sons and their friends at the door of the tower, which formed the entrance, and conducted them kindly to an inner apartment. "How are you, Duncan McNaughton?" said she, shaking hands with the Cearnach. "I am blythe to see you again at Corrie-vrin, though I fear you have hitherto been sadly your own enemy. But times have changed since our fathers' day: and surely the law is not so ill as it is thought here in the glens, or it would never have let you see soon back to your ain wife and bairns in Glendochart."

Great was her surprise, however, when the Cearnach narrated the story of his trial and escape, garnishing his tale as

well with strong invectives against the law, as with the praises of Hector, who, he said, had enabled him so successfully to elude his punishment; and whom he strongly commended to Mrs. M'Pherson's favour. "But where is your daughter?" he said, interrupting the woman's partial speech and warm invitations to our youth; "it is fit she should add the beauty of her countenance to this happy meeting."

"She is just putting on her kirtle, and will be here in a trice," said the matron. "Young women, ye ken, Duncan," she added, looking at Hector and the Cearnach's son, "must not be seen in their worst suit, or their worst looks, before such visiters as these; but here she is."

The female that now entered from the inner room, was well worthy of the interest which the Cearnach had expressed for her, as well as of the evident feeling of the junior M'Naughton, whose sentiments were discovered, at least to our hero, by the modest reddening of his face, when, after saluting his father, the girl with simple modesty, yet mountaineer warmth, took him also kindly by the hand. With a mother and brother such as Pheane M'Pherson had, it was not possible but she must have been interesting; and the old-fashioned gown of damask stuff, which she had just put on, and only wore on particular occasions, in these inner recesses of the hills, gave more evidence of her simplicity of heart than of her maiden vanity; and would have positively detracted from her beauty, or at least her shape, but that no art can destroy the actual effect of a pretty face.

As the M'Phersons and their guests continued to converse, the women that hastened backwards and forwards in the apartment, and the gillies that assisted, began to be particularly busy; and the board being soon after covered with the wholesome game of the mountains, all sat down with excellent appetites to the provided cheer, which, in due time, was sweetened with much warm Scottish feeling, and, at least when the whiskey appeared, became seasoned with a good spice of racy Highland wit.

An evening ramble down the glen, towards the lake, delightfully diversified the afternoon's employment; and the guests, having consented to tarry for the night, accepting of such accommodation as could be provided at Corrie-vrin, tales and songs round the cheerful peat fire closed the homely pleasures of an evening, such as Hector had often imagined in the house of the burghers of Perth, but seldom before had opportunity of enjoying.

CHAPTER X.

From Merab's eyes fierce and quick lightnings came,
 From Michol's the sun's mild, yet active, flame;
 Merab's long hair was glossy chestnut brown,
 Tresses of palest gold did Michol crown.
 Such was their outward form, and one might find
 A difference not unlike it in the mind.

COWLEY.

A PLEASANT morning, the summer sun-beams shining on their romantic hills, and one of those hearty Highland breakfasts, which are so keenly relished by the grateful traveller who ventures himself into parts so remote, gave excellent preparation to our youth and his friends, for a continuation of their delightful journey.

In no haste to separate, the morning was somewhat advanced ere they rose; and Farquhar, being the last to issue from the old building, for reasons which need not be explained, the whole soon mounted again the terraced slopes, and set forth over the hills on their way to Glenmore, the M'Phersons, according to the Highland fashion, insisting upon being convoy to their friends a part of the way; and half a dozen miles, more or less, being no object whatever to athletic Highlanders, the party went all on together for several hours in high conversation about the new circumstances of these parts, and the raising of the Black Watch; their talk greatly helping to enlighten Hector upon various matters with which he longed to be acquainted.

Commended as Hector was to the friendship of the M'Phersons, he could not help feeling a high admiration of the spirit and sentiments of those interesting youths; notwithstanding a simplicity of thinking with reference to the world, which, however natural to mere denizens of the hills, was sometimes amusing even to our youth himself. In the course of their journey, Samuel, the younger of the two, edging himself into separate conversation with Hector, be-

gan to make such circuitous inquiries respecting what he had seen of Margaret McNaughton, as well confirmed the inference that he drew from the conversation at Corrie-trin. When Hector narrated to him the whole tale of the escape, and in particular the impressive and passionate conduct of the Cearnach's daughter, at her father's trial, and the scream of joy that he heard burst from her on that anxious night of escape, when she saw him pass her in the dark street of Perth, our youth thought himself well repaid for all he had done, by the gleams of pleasure that shot from the young man's eyes, and the convulsive grasp of his hand, with which his gratitude was indicated.

By other speeches and inquiries, in the course of this journey, Hector perceived that Malcolm, the elder of the McPhersons, had aspired to the love of a daughter of the chief whom he was now about to visit, which accounted for the pleasure he took in approaching the spot where she dwelt; and, in short, that he was now about to be domiciled in a neighbourhood, where, among these secluded Highlanders, a strong attachment to their own mountains was only exceeded by romantic love for the maidens who dwelt in the glens between them. At length, their convoy agreed to return, and our travellers proceeded cheerily on their way.

It was beyond high noon of the fourth day after leaving the town of Perth, ere, mounting to the ridge of a toilsome hill, the heavy turrets of Glenmore Castle first rose into view. It was a full hour more, during which they had by no means been idle, ere they began to mount the slope on the top of which that venerable mass of turreted irregularity now appeared amidst a *garde d'honneur* of old oaks and Scotch firs, with a heavy stateliness that was almost majestic. Much, however, of this imposing effect arose from the peculiar character of the surrounding scenery. Round and undulating, yet irregularly disposed on every side, the hills were low at hand and lofty in the distance; so that the prospect was extensive and amphitheatrical, even though the glens which receded away into far-off wilds had been less diversified in their several characters; and though a sweeping lake, barely to be seen in the distance, now reflecting brilliantly the afternoon's sun, had been a less conspicuous object in one part of the back-ground. This latter portion of the landscape, however, and its interesting adjuncts, though comparatively but a peep, were read in the far distance, like a charming passage of pure romance, upon which the imagination of our youthful traveller lingered, as

he paused with eager pleasure, although he could distinguish nothing but clouds beyond it.

When our party drew near to the entrance of the stately fabric, which well deserved to be called a castle, Hector's attention was attracted by a sudden exclamation of the elder M'Naughton.

"There's something to do here! Do you see that, Farquhar!" he added, pointing to several groups of persons who straggled near the entrance. "Faith, I think there may be folks here that I should not see, or that should not see me, and I just come out of the woodie at Perth."

Hector now observed several rude vehicles near the principal door of the building, as also half a dozen of those low shaggy horses, called shelties, which run wild on these hills, standing at the gable of the castle, linked together by their thong-bridles—some of them, indeed, having only ropes, or halters, made of twisted hair, which, however, in the practised hands of their kilted riders, as they trotted over these wild mountains, did wondrous well in place of bit and bridle. With all this, he observed beyond the beeches which straggled behind the castle, several bare-legged gillies, stretched under the trees, like Indians, who seemed watching the sun in the blue heavens above them, and enjoying the pleasing luxury of unusual warmth and delightful Highland laziness.

"I dare not be seen here just yet," said M'Naughton, drawing back behind the bushes.

"It is right, however, Farquhar, that you should go in, and inform the lairds o' the news. And while you introduce this brave young man, do not forget to tell my friend, Glenmore, how much I am indebted to him for life and liberty, and that I will see you both in two days hence if you come to the pass of Glendearg. Farewell for the present. I go to wait for your mother and sisters, whom God send safe to a happy meeting with me in Glendochart." Thus saying, the Gearnach dashed down the bushy side of the hill, and was soon out of sight, while the remaining three made for the entrance of the building.

Nothing could be more genuine than the joy and pleasure with which the warm-hearted chief welcomed Farquhar and our hero, as he read in their looks their success in regard to his old acquaintance.

"I knew, young man," said he, repeatedly shaking Hector by the hand, "that it would not be long until I should see you on the hills; and I could have well predicted all the bravery which Farquhar attributes to you.

But, let us not linger here; there's routh and plenty shall be in my house this day; for here are all the friends nearly that I ever knew, and some, too, that I don't know overly well, come to eat a collop with me at Glenmore. And, hark ye, young man," he added to Hector, "if they talk of politics, have you long ears and closed lips. You would not, I am sure, tell at the cross of Perth what you might hear in a Highland hallan; especially when the drink gets in to drive out the wit; nor would you, for a thoughtless blab of the tongue, sell the life of any honest man, that just has a liking for auld friends, and a true fealty for auld masters. But come along."

With this the chief led Hector inside, and introduced him to one or two of the younger guests as a youth who, he was pleased to say, was likely to do honour to any acquaintance he might make on the hills.

The castle of Glenmore, however venerable or imposing at a distance, was as unaccountable a remnant of feudal inconvenience, as any modern tourist, in quest of the barbarous, could easily discover in the wilds of the North. Those parts of it, which, on the approach of a stranger, looked most picturesque, were, in the upper interior, at least, the merest holes, or the most tiresome stair-screws; or they consisted of ruinous battlements, which seemed nothing more than an empty gutter of decayed masonry above, and a great vaulted stone hall below, where the laird and his people were wont to feast "for evermore." Still the whole fabric was in the interior peculiarly ill-fitted for that series of formalities which we, who live in the midst of refined vacations, call the entertainment of company; and so the ladies, who had to conduct the confusion, found it on the present occasion. Fortunately, however, with Highland feasting is not usually associated the idea of scientific *gourmanderie*, or perfect elegance; nor is Highland hospitality confined, as much as with us in the south, to the display of a lavish waste of money which gives no satisfaction. Accordingly, during the morning, with those that tarried at the castle, there was great hilarity amidst a Babel of confusion: in the afternoon, at the dinner, there was great plenty and little elbow-room—with unconscionable appetites and most heterodox cookery; and in the evening, the clatter of Gaelic tongues was tremendous, and the music "a rank ringing storm." With all this, however, there was honest friendship expressed, and as honest reproach; and withal, great warmth of feeling and extraordinary enjoyment. The politics discussed, however—the Black

Watch gathering, secret rumours, and secret epistles, "Charlie, and Jamie, and Geordie, and a' "—we choose to reserve for a more convenient season.

Until a regular "clearing out" took place of this Babel of Highland delight, no time was afforded for our young hero to make his observations on that part of the family which is most likely to interest young men, namely, the ladies, which as yet he could say little about, notwithstanding all the toasts that had been drank to their health, and all the speeches which had been raved in their praise. When on the morrow, however, the small windows were thrown open, and the *snell* breezes of Breadalbane had dissipated the fumes of Highland jollification from the arched apartments of the castle, the ladies came forth with looks of rural health, and Hector was called to a more particular introduction.

"A young friend from the good city of Perth," said the chief, handing Hector forward, "Hector Monro by name, and a great enthusiast for the free life of the Highlands. He has come, by my invitation, to learn to hunt the badger, and to play the broadsword with our lads of the glens. I rede you, my dame, to give him good favour. This next is my daughter Kate, whom you may see, by the red on her cheek, and the darkness of her eye, is imbued with the true spirit of the hills. And this, too, is my little daughter, Marion, whom you may also see by the paleness of her face, and the light blue of her eye, that she has rather too much of the timid spirit of the Lowlands. Look up, and do not blush, Minny, my child; the youth is but a bird of passage, coming to perch his season among the mountains. By heavens!" he added, half mentally, "but he makes a bow as graceful as a courtier, and looks as if he already felt himself as good as his company."

The latter observation of the laird was the effect of one of those sudden flashes of penetration, by which from small circumstances a whole character is sometimes seen; for, in fact, Hector seemed at once to feel himself in his own proper level, and the ladies did not fail to respect him accordingly. Indeed, the dame, a handsome, good-humoured woman, approaching to forty, and dressed with somewhat of the stiff richness of the time, conceived at once a partiality for the interesting stripling; and, whatever danger she might have seen in such a youth being admitted to some intimacy with her daughters, was obviated or lulled by the said womanish partiality, which a fair exterior alone can account for, aided by her own good-natured indolence of

character, and warranted by the simplicity of manners prevailing among the hills.

The few words the laird had spoken regarding his daughters, gave Hector a ready key to their several characters, and well seconded the impression their looks could not fail to convey. Full-formed and striking, both in person and countenance, the eldest was a feminine personation of her father, with all a woman's gracefulness of manner, and all a mountaineer's loftiness of spirit. The character of her younger sister, both as it respected her mind and her person, was not so much a contrast as a modification of these qualities, with the addition of some other traits, which, without rendering the difference very obvious in common, caused them, under certain circumstances, remarkably to differ. What that difference consisted of, is not at present material to our story.

CHAPTER XI.

Who spurns an oath of fealty to the power
Of rulers, chosen by a tyrant's nod.

GRAHAM.

EVAN M'EVAN, the laird of Glenmore, more resembled the genuine Highland gentleman of the old school, than that extravagant compound of chivalry and barbarity, ruffianism and generosity, which make an effective poetical character; and with which it is the fashion to invest all Highland chieftains, in common with the romantic fighting knights of the middle ages. As little was he that mixture of ludicrous pride, poverty, and choler, which forms a caricature of another sort. Of chivalrous sentiment he was certainly far from destitute; for that belongs to a people whose education is *an education of sentiment*, aided by impressions from the bold features of nature around them.

But this generous chivalry, though often bordering on romance, was, as well as the other sentiments which generally accompany it, tempered and directed by that plain good sense and mother-wit philosophy, which is well known to be no rarity on the north side of the Tweed. That he felt strongly on all subjects is true; for *feeling*, and a sort of sentimentality of constitution, if not of intellect, is very much the distinctive attribute of the Scotch character. Though this attribute, together with his necessary ignorance of artificial life and government, became the cause of some prejudices, by leading him to exaggerate the wrongs of his country, as well as his own individual importance; and in intercourse with his equals, making him ready of impression of kindness or offence; made him as ready to second them by word or deed, as the free and fiery spirit of a warlike people also made customary; yet was this attribute the foundation, in brief, of all his virtues; as it ever will be when united to natural generosity of disposition, and guided by

experience—while virtue shall be considered any thing more than a negative quality.

Though M'Evan had seen more of artificial life than very many of his brother lairds of the hills, his comparative ignorance of the world, still acting upon that simplicity of character which belongs to manly natures, made him, when in contact even with the burghers of the Lowlands, appear occasionally in a light that was almost ludicrous. But had he been trained to imbibe more of this sort of knowledge, it would have doubtless been at the expense of half his virtues, and, perhaps, more than half of his happiness. For, one great branch of the latter was, that deriving most of his enjoyments from mere nature, and personal activity on the hills, he did not feel his own property—and highly relished a species of fare, which, to men habituated to luxury, would have been quite pitiable. Indeed, the property of the Highlander of that day, from chief to cotter, when collated with their personal pride and poetry of character, has been the subject of endless ridicule to their southland neighbours. For this ridicule, no doubt, the bare massy walls, undulating floors, grotesque cupboards, and hard seats and beds, within Glenmore castle, would certainly have afforded excellent materials, even to the Scotchman of modern times, as well as no bad illustration of the character of their owner. But this pleasant sneering would only show that ignorance of what human happiness really consists, as well as of what constitutes the sound materials of a thoroughly manly character, which is the besetting sin of the superficial lauders of discontented luxury and care-worn improvement.

That the laird of Glenmore should have been prejudiced against the law, and its operation in the Highlands, particularly in criminal cases, was neither remarkable at the time, nor inconsistent with his character and information. Having, in the course of his own experience, seen its effects almost exclusively confined to cases of that sort of cruelty or oppression which grows out of the severe application of general rules, that takes no notice of circumstances, which may yet weigh strongly upon a feeling and considerate mind, he was disposed to view it much more as one of those inventions by which the powerful contrive to oppress the weak and to fetter the free, than any system of general justice. It was this that, stimulated by his natural generosity, made him go so far in the case of M'Naughton. But the interfering of a chief to get off a clansman by force or intimidation, in spite of the law, was then far from uncommon; and that in cases

much less justifiable than the one alluded to. The chief's penetration into character, as well as his good feeling, was well justified by the subsequent conduct of the Cearnach, as we shall hereafter have occasion to see.

The life that Hector now led for many months in the bosom of the impressive solitudes of Breadalbane, may be left to something else than a wordy description. Sometimes he lived in the homely hallan of the reformed Cearnach, in the wild seclusion of Glendochart; again, he spent days together in the romantic valley of Corrie-vrin, with the two handsome brothers, to whom he could not help becoming greatly attached; but, generally, his domicile was at Glenmore castle, from which the laird would, on no account, suffer him to depart, until, at least, he should learn to know, thoroughly, the peculiar life of the mountains, and to be accomplished in all the manly sports and exercises which, in their perfection, are so highly admired by a simple but romantic people.

In the following spring, the gathering of the Black Watch, taking place in Glenlyon, Hector was deprived of the society of the gallant brothers. Katherine M'Evan also much missed the occasional, though stolen, visits of a lover, whose noble spirit and handsome exterior might well excuse the partiality of a Highland maiden, and, in common with her father, she could not help lamenting the reduced situation, and poor prospects of the widow's sons. As for the Cearnach, he now lived quiet and domestic at Glendochart, and, to testify his repentance for former offences, as well as in the hopes of a pardon from the government, at length consented to allow his son also to join the Black Watch and to swear fealty even to King George, of Hanover. He was farther induced to this step, by the hope of speedy promotion for the youth in this gallant corps, the number of the cadets of good families, who had taken a place in the ranks, reconciling both to the present inferiority of the station.

The particulars regarding that celebrated regiment will come in their due place; mean time, the cry of the first parting, and putting themselves into bondage, of so many picked men, as now, from all quarters, gathered towards Glenlyon, ran up through the glens with pathos and with poetry, and stirred up our youth's spirit with a new and almost painful ambition. At length, the brothers, as well as M'Naughton, taking an affectionate leave of Hector, as well as of their respective friends and sweethearts, took their departure from the hills of Breadalbane. Had all parties known what was ultimately ordained, it would have been a more pathetic, ~~and more solemn parting~~.

CHAPTER XII.

The spirit which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude: I will no longer endure it, though yet I know no wise remedy how to avoid it.

SHAKESPEARE.

A CHANGE was now fast coming over the spirit of Hector's life. It might be only that change which seems to belong to certain stages of it, and to mark certain epochs in our transient existence. It might be no more than the natural transition from the dreamy and inquisitive uncertainties of youth, as its years and its fancies fade away, and there comes gradually upon the absorbing mind, the rational perception, the firmness, and the confidence of ripening manhood.

But in Hector's case there was something more than even this. The mind of man is a kingdom, whose extent its owner is by no means aware of, and which he seldom finds himself well able either to survey or to rule. From the solitudes of the mountains, from the heaven above, and the earth beneath, he had drank in much of the deep spirit of nature, and appropriated the whole, as it were, into the extending realms of his own mind. From conversation with himself in his solitary rambles, he had begun to know something of the graspings of his own understanding, and the furniture of his fancy. From the few books which, up to this period, had fallen in his way, he began to see, not without inward repining, how much there was to know; and from the slight taste he had had at Glenmore, of the elegances of a superior style of life, he could not help inferring how much in this fair world there was to enjoy. It was only in his moments of melancholy that the hopeful spirit of youth would allow him to conceive, or to think upon, how much there might be *to suffer*. With every succeeding day, however, there came upon him, more and more, the idea of how much in the world there might be *to do*.

It is thus that thoughtless youth merges into anxious man.

hood, and thus is laid, in the mind, the great foundations of future good and evil. But if Hector thus obtained, within the recesses of his own breast, a more definite ambition; and more rational aims, these were, of course, bottomed, after all, upon the great mover of human purposes, and handmaid of the mind's perceptions, *discontent*, which, like the changing phantom of the hypochondriac, seems to be the haunting companion of man. Yet, if this omnipresent Mephistopheles of the world be the spoiler of many pleasures, and the everlasting evil eye that glares with a lurid light on man's possessions, it is also well known to be the goad to all his exertions, and, in some respects, the germ of all his greatness.

While Hector's mind worked, like yeast, with his own secret thoughts, he received, with joy, an unexpected invitation. It came from the chief himself, who, interrupting him one day in one of his reveries, requested his company as far as Balloch castle, at Taymouth, the ancient princely seat of the Earl of Breadalbane.

"And what may be our errand, sir?" said Hector, with unconscious curiosity.

"It cannot be supposed, young man, that you should understand politics, or, rather, Highland politics," said the chief, with a shrewd bend of his brow; "but this new German king, this second George, is not just so secure in his seat, even yet, as the Provost of Perth may be in his, though the power of the good citizen lasts but for a year. His majesty, therefore, wants to make all the friends he can beyond the Grampians, as well as among the black-skulled Whigs of the west, or the snivelling psalm-singers of the Lowlands. So, as the earl behooves to be his friend, as well as my puissant southland neighbour, it will be expected that I should show face, and look as loyal as is now the fashion, though, God knows, between you and I, it is neither with good will nor a good conscience."

"Then you are not exactly," inquired Hector, "a sincere friend to this king that reigns over us here in Scotland; and yet lives half the year in England and half in Hanover, as I hear tell."

"Upon my word, Hector," said the chief, condescendingly, "that is a question that older men than you would not venture to ask me. In truth, my affection for this present man cannot be expected to be very violent, all things considered," he added, laying his hand mechanically on the side where his basket-hilted sword should have hung; "and it will depend very much on his own behaviour whether I shall

much preference as his instinctive attachment to the chief would allow, was, by the youth's request, appointed his squire on the present occasion.

From several circumstances, as well as from the fact of the laird's having doffed, at this setting forth, those finely-mounted long-barrelled pistols, which, when Hector first saw him, he wore under the lap of his plaid with such imposing effect; and his having parted with that personal god, his horn-handled dirk, the youth suspected that the desire to meet the earl was only *part* of the business of this journey; for M'Evan was not of a temper to make all this parade of obedience to the hated disarming act, did no reasons sway him, such as he was not likely to explain to one of Hector's years. Sufficient rumours, of secret communications from the court of St. Germain, and proposed meetings of the chiefs in the hills, and grievous complaints against the House of Brunswick, and sailing of fleets from the French coast, &c., had reached Hector even in the wilds of Breadalbane, to account for the present caution of the chief, as well as to rouse his curiosity on the present occasion.

As they trotted along, mounting heights, and descending the hollows which lay in their way, the journey seemed to Hector to become unusually tedious. This feeling arose, in part, from the lowering aspect of the day; and the sterile appearance of the blue heavy hills around, the dark wilderness of the woody ravines, on the edge of which they often clambered, with the weary flats of dull heath over which they passed, which, seeming equally objectless and endless, at length disposed our youth to reflections of a character unusually painful, if not melancholy. These were chiefly concerning his own condition and prospects, which, orphan as he was, and unsettled to any spot or pursuit, while yet a strong feeling of independence, and a stronger of ambition, had, of late, worked incessantly in his mind, seemed to him peculiarly perplexing and serious.

"What are you brooding on?" inquired the chief, unwilling to allow the youth to fall into one of his abstracted moods. "Tell me your thought, and I will help it out if I can."

"I am thinking selfishly," said Hector, "about what I shall do, should nothing happen, on this expedition, to give me hopes for the future—that is to say, where I shall go, when I leave the earl's castle."

"And what is your determination, suppose it should be against returning with me to Glenmore?"

"To return to my old friend, the burgess of Perth. The affair that took me from him must now be blown over, and he would, at least, give me judicious advice—for he knows me well."

"Advice is no rarity in the world, Hector, though but a small portion is either good or applicable. Nevertheless, your reason is good, for, without the knowledge of the character to whom advice is addressed, it might be worse than useless. The deacon is a worthy man, but he can only advise you with reference to trade, and trade, let me tell you, ought never to be engaged in by one of the disposition which I know you possess."

The truth of this observation struck home to Hector's experience. "What then can I do, sir," said he, "situated as I am? I cannot linger all my life, an idler, on your hospitality. I have just been thinking——"

"A foolish thought, I have no doubt, about your own position, of which you can be expected to know nothing," interrupted the laird. "But I will give you my thought. Man, on the earth, is like a ball on the surface of a billiard table. His original position is not only determined by a hand higher than his own, but he is afterwards driven about by the collision or concussion of other balls, or beings, with whom he may be forced into contact. The comparison is not very complete; but the evil I apprehend is, that as far as I have yet observed, we are forced to be so passive as we are, and that the strong hand of circumstances, so often renders abortive all activity or energy, which may be thought of by the individual, or employed to place himself in the position congenial to his disposition, even when he has found out precisely what that disposition is."

"And what would you have me to do, sir?" said Hector, opening his eyes at the unexpected philosophy of this speech. "What can I do, but return to my old employment with the burgess of Perth?"

"It would be better for you to think of becoming a common volunteer in the Black Watch, as many a good man's son has done," said the chief, "than to prostrate your spirit to the leger and the ell-wand in the chapman's shop. But no," he added, pausing, "I cannot, on consideration, advise you to join with Whigs and Hanoverians, while our lawful king is a fugitive in a foreign land. I do hope, that if there are those whom I expect to see at Balloch castle, you will not require to speak of such plans, if I have either influence or interest."

"I have no words to express," said Hector, with animation, "the gratitude I feel for all you have done for me."

"Felt, Hector—not done," said the chief, interrupting him with a benevolent nod of his head. "But let me caution you against unnecessarily multiplying the disappointments of life, by flattering yourself beforehand much respecting any event. Should the earl, or any else I may now meet, not think fit to become your friend, (and that is quite probable,) I really do not know what advice to give you, since times forbid me being materially useful to you myself. Your situation seems strange, and your life may yet be stranger. I am no great master of the moralities of wisdom, but I have observed in my time, that man is a tree that never grows strong and flourishing in the world until he has fairly taken root; so that, striking his suckers deep, and taking hold even of the stony places of the earth, he may be able to brave the blasts to which every twig in the forest is subject. You are evidently a seed of some noble tree, whom the random wind of fortune is likely to toss about for a season. It is just such as you, therefore, that may look far vicissitude, until you fairly find the soil for which the constitution of your mind has fitted you. But whenever you find that, and disposition is satisfied, there rest your purposes and perseverance, in spite of all discouragements; for there you will grow, and there only you will flourish, and no doubt, prepare a soil for those who may come after you, that they at least, may have a less fugitive fortune."

The tone of this discourse took Hector by surprise, he never before having heard the chief so philosophical. "Pray go on, sir," he said, "and give me fully your thoughts. I feel sensibly the want of a few aphorisms of experience, as a nucleus to my own crude meditations upon that world of which I as yet know so little."

"The world is a strange gathering, which I but little understand myself," continued the laird, "and man an animal more difficult to describe than any other of the more uniform productions of nature. But this you will find, that though none of nature's productions require the exercise of sympathy, or the energies of mutual support, so much as man, none exercise the feeling so little, or so often turn it strangely against those to whom it would be most valuable."

"I suppose that is true sir," said Hector, as the chief paused: "but, pray go on."

"To proceed with my allegory, then," Glenmore continued; "while the oak of the wood suffers itself to be

twined about by many sapplings, which it seems proud to support, and which add grace to its trunk, the reverse of this holds true in the world; for the strong oak among men, who is himself rooted firm and can defy the blast, surrounds himself with a circle of exclusion, which poisons or crushes the feeble plant that intrudes under his shadow, giving his support only to oaks like himself, who need it not; while it is the bending willow, or the sensitive plant of society, which are most ready to add their own feeble strength to the tender twigs of misfortune, that require sympathy or need support. But I begin to moralize, because I am myself suffering somewhat from the world. If fortune favours your ambition, Hector, try to differ from the common character of mankind."

A long interval of silence followed this speech, and, in this manner, with occasional starts of talk of a lighter sort, the time passed over until the brightening summer's evening brought them within sight of the great valley of Glenlyon.

CHAPTER XIII.

Ha! boys—I see a party appearing—wha's yon?
 Methinks it's the captain of Bewcastle, and Jephtha's John.
 FRAY OF SUPORT.

It was yet early on the following morning, after they had risen and again set forth, when their course still continuing among the passes of the hills, their ears were saluted with a pleasant strain, which, as yet thin and distant like the shepherd's reed, broke softly the perfect silence of the morning. The very shelties on which they rode began to cock their ears, and to move them backwards and forwards "on the pivot of their skulls," as Wordsworth would say, and, putting up their noses, seemed to snuff the music, as if it had been a morning refreshment; and the scarcely less *tainted* gillies, who *clomb* the hill in the rear, first stopped stone still, and then began to run, as if struck with a sudden enthusiasm.

"I'll wager a gill o' the best usquebaugh that's to be had in the change-house o' Kinmore," cried Donald, running forward, "that that's the piobrach o' the Black Watch already coming up wi' a sough frae the bughts o' Glenlyon. Oigh! maister! maister—shentlemans! will her honours no just turn up the beasties, and gie a glint o'er the crown o' the hill to see what the lads 'll be doing."

Putting their beasts to the trot, the chief and our youth soon surmounted the crown of the hill, and, certainly, the sight that burst upon them was well calculated to stir up lively emotions in a mind like Hector's. Besides the imposing effect of the dark hills of Dull, which rose abrupt and lofty opposite to where our travellers were; there was the long sweep of the glen beneath, widening upwards towards the western mountains, with the rapid river, of the same name, rushing over rocks, and sometimes roaring like a lion, or rolling dark and deep at the bottom of the glen. In a broad green field near the mouth of the valley, which stretched

for a considerable way by the banks of the Lyon, the whole line of the Black Watch, now above eight hundred strong, were already stretched out on their morning's parade, and the martial appearance of so large a body of men, in the midst of such scenery—their bright scarlet coats, with which they had just been supplied, in place of their former dark tartan dresses, from which they took their name, their arms glittering in the sun, and their picturesque evolutions on the field, to the sound of drum and bagpipe—all formed a sight that was highly exhilarating, while it filled our hero with sentiments almost amounting to envy.

Descending the hill rapidly, M'Evan and himself were enabled to obtain a nearer view of the dress and accoutrements of a corps which were regarded in the Highlands with so much interest. Instead of the short-tailed coat now in use, the soldiers of the Watch wore scarlet jackets and waistcoats, with buff facings and white lace; and instead of the heavy bonnet of black feathers now worn, a smaller bonnet, with the diced border of different colours, resembling the fess cheque in the arms of the family of Stewart, and this, in some cases, set off by a plume of cocks' or eagles' feathers, and in others, by a small bushy piece of black bear's skin. The belted plaid of twelve yards' length, so called from being kept tight round the body by a belt, was worn in the usual manner, partly placed round the middle, and the upper part fixed on the left shoulder, ready to be thrown loose, and wrapped round the shoulders and firelock in rainy weather, or to serve on the march the purposes of a blanket. Besides the belt which fixed the plaid, and in which were stuck, in most cases, pistols and a dirk, in addition to the regular arms, another broad black belt, fixed in front by a large buckle of brass or silver, served to support the basket-hilted sword, which, along with the musket and bayonet, were furnished by government; and round the middle was a third belt of black leather, which served to support the cartouch-box, then worn in front. With all this weight of arms, in the wearing of which this regiment of gentlemen were permitted a certain *ad libitum* irregularity, which would be surprising in the present day, when officers have a very different sort of men to deal with; many were also permitted to wear tar-gets, after the old fashion of their country, which, appearing thickly in the ranks, had a very peculiar effect. Nor did this custom, soon or easily, give way to time, and the habits of the infantry, among whom the Highland regi-

ments mixed, any more than the other dearly-loved customs of their fathers; for, seven years after, as the celebrated Captain Grose relates, he saw them still worn by the men of this regiment, then on service in Flanders.

This appeared to be a morning of some important parade, for the forty-third, as this regiment was then named, were in full dress; and Sir Robert Munro, himself, then lieutenant-colonel,—a veteran who had bought his experience well in the old German wars,—galloping about the field on a tall gray charger, gave the command in a voice that was heard above the deep roll of the drum, and was obeyed with alacrity by the proud-spirited Highlanders. Round the park waited numbers of gillies, attendants both of officers and rank and file,—for a great portion even of the latter were thus waited on,—no small number of the gillies holding horses by the bridle which had carried those who lived at a distance to the exercising ground, and with some of whom Donald Downie, through the ready medium of his snuff mull, was now fast making up a temporary friendship.

"And wha may your maister be, friend?" said he, reciprocating *nosology* with a gentleman's gentleman, and a "master of the horse," to at least the one that carried *his* master, and over which horse the man now exercised a wholesome measure of temporary tyranny.

"What rank is my maister, do you say?" said the man, "ye may see him in the ranks there, if your een be clear enough, wi' the feather bobbing aboon his lug; and in the best rank, too, for he's in the best front o' Lochnell's company, and stands beside the officer next in command—that's Corporal M'Pherson, my troth!"

"An honourable station in the army, my friend," said the honourable Donald Downie, with pauky seriousness. "And wha owns the horse that ye chaff sae at the mouth, as if ye had ne'er handled a bridle before? Let the beast alone, man, it's a quiet enough brute."

"It's a canker'd creature when it gets the cauld iron for a gumstick," replied the man, "and requires to be exercised and civilceezed, as well as the other shentlemans o' the Black Watch,—and wha's would it be but Farlan M'Farlan's, my maister? How else would his honour be able to ride twa lang miles and a bittock, to the parawding place, an't 'twarna for the beast? and wha would carry his honour's guns and firelocks, gin I didna rin wi' them, fit for fit, after the mare's tail? But wha'll be *your* ain maister, since ye'll please to be a chatekeese!"

Donald, with the proper flourish of superiority, announced the style and titles of the chief of Glenmore.

"Hough!" grunted the gilly; "I see by your maister's look, that he would be a proud man if he could get to be a private gentleman in the Black Watch, like my maister's honour; but that's no the fortune of every man that envies it, I jalouse."

This instructive communion of congenial spirits was interrupted, however, by the mandate of the laird, who, notwithstanding the secret wish of Hector to get a few words' speech of the brethers, or M'Naughton, thought fit to trot off the ground, from the wish to be at Balloch castle early in the day; and telling our youth that there would be plenty of opportunities of meeting his friends in the Watch, at least on their return from his visit to the earl, away they proceeded towards the rich valley of Taymouth. What Hector's thoughts in regard to himself were as he looked back over his shoulder at the imposing array of the Watch, and heard the scream of their warlike music echo through the valley, we cannot here stop to describe.

At last our travellers arrived at Taybridge, where meeting the few followers which the laird called his tail, and crossing the Tay, they soon found themselves at the earl's gate, which flew open to admit them into the princely park of the noble proprietor of the demesne.

CHAPTER XIV.

Come, come, no more of this unprofitable chat.

SHAKESPEARE.

As our small company marched up to Balloch castle, under the lofty trees of the great avenue, Hector found his pride, both in himself and the laird, his patron, ooze out of him sensibly, from the effect of what he observed, like the boasted valour of a well-known character. When at length he stood under the lofty turrets of the ancient building, upon the site of which stands the present more convenient castle of Taymouth, he could not help being conscious of an unpleasant degree of awe and personal humiliation. In addition to the imposing appearance of the then castle of Balloch,—at that time inconveniently, though magnificently, habitable, and one of the finest relics of feudal grandeur in Scotland,—the mansion was at the moment crowded with company. There were now in it lords from the Lowlands, and chieftains from the Isles; Whig lairds from Argyleshire, and high visitors all the way from London city;—so that, as our escort marched up in front of the towers, and halted opposite to the ancient arched entrance, numerous heads appeared at sundry Gothic windows above; and there were even ladies, to watch them, looking out of the lower battlements, where they stood enjoying the fine prospect around.

“It was true what the laird told me,” said Hector to himself,—“that here I should at least see and hear something which I should afterwards remember. But will Glenmore really bring me in among all these lords and gentles? If so, this day opens up the avenue of my fortune.”

These high anticipations, however, were wofully damped, not only by his own reception when it came, but by that of the laird himself, who was suffered to stand a considerable time in the doubtful region of the old entrance, and that

in the view of his own men, to whom he had always hitherto appeared the greatest man in the universe,—ere the governor of the castle sent a powdered man to give him admittance. But Hector's mortification was complete, when, after cooling his own heels along with the common men of the laird's tail, for a quarter of an hour, without any notice being taken of him or his companions,—saving, indeed, the occasional gibe or saucy sneer of the pampered menials of the great visitors of the Earl, as they idled past them,—he and the rest were ordered round to the rear of the buildings, where, guided in by a low door, they were all huddled indiscriminately into a stone apartment, evidently that appropriated for the common servitors of the place.

Hector could not help being amused, however, at the looks of stiff pride and high-toned Highland gravity, which his Breadalbane companions shot under their dark brows at the powdered idlers, who, in Lowland dresses, loitered about the passages, or encumbered the stone benches of the hall.

"Is this to be my entertainment in this great man's house?" said Hector, internally, as he hastily surveyed the clumsy flagons of malt broust, and the piles of bones and braxey, or whatever else the cold hashes consisted of, which seemed to have been prepared for the ordinary attendants of the lordlings now at the castle; and which, flanked by coarse loaves of wheaten bread, was, with small ceremony, placed before him and his hungry companions.

"You do not eat, Maister Fair-face," said a thick-set fellow in a mongrel Highland and Lowland dress, who stood making his observations in the corner opposite Hector.

"You do not eat, I say!"

"I do as I please, with your leave," said Hector, scornfully; all his pride now aroused, as he threw on the questioner an angry glance.

"As long as you can, sir impudence," retorted the man, drawing down a heavy pair of brows, and nodding his head with impudent familiarity. "You are a pretty Jack-pudding, that answers my civil observe with your een glancing like candles, and a voice as peremptor as you were my lord himself."

"You ought not to speak so peremptor, young man, to a shentleman like Maister Maglashan," struck in a thin-voiced servitor, who stood by, happy to recommend himself, by a little seasonable injustice, to the favour and friendship of a gentleman of Maister Maglashan's power among the lower powers in Balloch castle. "It's not for beardless callants to set up their gab to the like o' Maister Maglashan, al-

though ye be a stranger, and the laird o' Glenmore's best gilly, may be."

"Maister Hector is no gilly," exclaimed one of the Breadalbane men, now taking their young friend's part; "he is the laird's friend, that sits at his ain table; he is—that is—I'll not see him put upon."

"And what is he? what may he be? since ye are sae proud," said Maglashan; "does he belong to Breadalbane, or is he an oe of Glenmore's, that he looks sae fierce, and will neither eat or drink where good men are set? Na, dinna look sae blate, but up wi't, you that kens. Wha's the youngster's father? and wha's his mother? and what's his kith? and wha's his kin? that he sits here in the Earl's, ha', and sets up his crokets at Dougal Maglashan?"

This examination was becoming too close and too particular for such information about Hector as was patent even at Glenmore; so the Highlanders, bending down their heads and plying vigorously at their trenchers, sagaciously left the youth to answer for himself.

All present, however, were disappointed when our hero made no reply whatever, but merely continued to regard the querist with a smile of contempt.

"It's a shame and a sin to put sic a provocation on an honest lad," said one of the laird's tail, clearing his mouth. "I'll warrant him o' as gentle bluid as the best o' us, although he *was* but a merchant chopkeeper in the Lowlands, and nae disparagement."

"A merchant! a chopkeeper in the Lowlands! a pedlar wi' a pack! may be a tailor or a staymaker—ha, ha, ha!" screamed Maglashan, in an ecstasy. "Now, if I dinna deserve to be pricked in the hurdies wi' one of his ain needles for offering a civility to such a bit of proud buckram! But here," he added, filling up a cup of the thin liquor that stood before him, "it becomes a shentleman o' gude bluid like me to bear no ill-will, so if the shopkeeper callant just toasts my health and drinks a cup of this broust, for a friendship, and for the honour o' the Earl of Breadalbane's cheer, I'll forget and forgive all that's past, and gie him a snuff out o' my ain mull to souther the bargain;" saying which, he held the cup most peremptorily up to Hector's face. "Will she no tak it?—will her no tak it yet, and drink to my health and marriage day, just for a flag of truce, young man?" cried the impetuous Highlander, as Hector drew himself back in refusal of the proffer, but, though burning with indignation at this Highland freedom, still preserved a dogged silence.

"Haud off your hand, friend," said one of the Breadal-

bane men, again interfering. "It's a shame to provoke the brave young chield, when ye see he'll neither pick nor dab wi' you, as the henwife said to the cadger. Will ye raise a quarrel already in the laird's ha'?"

By this time, Hector had sprung to his feet, and plucking the cup out of Maglashan's hand, threw it and its contents at his head with a force, that, had it taken effect, would have done no small damage to the hardest skull. Fortunately, however, by stooping suddenly, the wary Highlander avoided the blow, only receiving part of the liquor; and now springing towards our hero, was only withheld from flying at his throat by the hasty interference of the bystanders.

"Here's a brulzie!" cried several voices, rushing into the hall, as a Highland quarrel was now fairly a-foot, and sides began to be taken, and a Babel of Gaelic confusion already prevailed in the motley assembly.

"Deevil confound General Wade, and auld King George, and every southron son of them," exclaimed the Breadalbane man, feeling in vain for his wonted side-arms, "that doesna leave a puir fallow a decent blade to help him to keep peace and quietness in an honest shentleman's house! It's a rank scandal to you, Maister Maglashan, to stop the vera meat in our wezons wi' setting up a quarrel about naething ava but a coup o' sour broust, whilk the brave boy had mickle better no fill his wame wi'."

"Will I be spoken to by a merchant Lowlander," cried the fierce champion of the servants' hall, now foaming with fury, "that has not as mickle beard on his lip as the cat could lick off wi' her tongue? Na, do not draw your ske-nocles at me, men—Dougal Maglashan—doesna fight like an Italian stabber. But if I be a living man, the Earl of Breadalbane shall know of this brulzie; and this saucy boy shall beg a forgiveness at my feet before he leaves Ballach castle."

In the midst of the latter part of the confusion, Hector suffered himself to be persuaded to leave the hall, and passing out of the small postern at the rear of the building, he gladly found an opportunity of brooding alone over the mortified feelings by which he was now overpowered.

"I see plainly and evidently what my life is to be," he said, in the bitterness of his spirit, and with all the confidence of youthful ignorance and passion, as he paced hastily on under the trees of the lawn without. "Born a beggar, and too proud to be a tradesman, I must, forsooth, aim at being a gentleman, while in reality but an eleemosynary

dependant on a pair Highland laird. And thus, whenever I go abroad, I am liable to all the insults which belong to the questionable shape in which I come. What should I do? and whither shall I betake me, where I may be able to stand up with common confidence, and look every one fearlessly in the face? Would to heaven, I could even enlist as a gentleman private in the Black Watch! I should then, at least, have my sixpence a day independent, and care for no one."

Thus our proud youth indulged his boyish rage, with more reflections on his condition and prospects than need be repeated; but when he lifted up his eyes, and looking round, contrasted the heavenly scenery now in his view, and the serene expression of all nature around him, with the boiling bitterness of his own spirit, aroused, as it was, by a sense of shame for himself, he came home to his consciousness. Continuing to muse, as he gazed down the sweet valley of the Tay, he felt a soothing tranquillity steal over his heart, his secret mortifications melt away, and giving place to that involuntary elevation which belongs to the ennobling influence of nature.

He had now mounted to the top of one of those picturesque knolls which diversify the scenic undulations of the princely park of Taymouth.* The whole scene, stretched out around him, might well sooth a spirit less easily moved, and less aspiring than his own. All the profanation of wandering tourists and cicerone guide-books, in our own days, will not take entirely away either its poetry or its romance from the noble valley of Balloch, in the midst of which Hector now sat. On his left, lay smooth and glassy to the evening sun, the long Loch Tay, stretching, in quiet beauty, along the green and woody foot of the "bold Ben-Lawers,"—which, rising four thousand feet above its level, at once assumes the form and attitude of the foreground giant of the hills.

Beneath, on the glassy bosom of the lake, a pretty tuft of rich green seems to sit like the fairy isle of the water's expanse, and still known by the name of Holy Woman's Isle; its ruined priory not, at that time, dilapidated, as nearly a century more has made it, but even then almost hidden under its trees; and the sanctity of the whole, neither yet impaired by time, nor its picturesque beauty profaned by improvement. Nearer to the feet of our contemplative-hero, the clear and deep Tay, issuing slowly forth from the Loch, like a staid child from the bosom of its parent, wanders in broad and imposing beauty along the margin of those pleasure-grounds, in the midst of which he was seated. Follow-

ing the steam from this point, away she floats past the imaginative spectator, like the soft and graceful daughter of nature, until the rapid Lyon, issuing from the mouth of a dark, but noble glen, which she passes, marries himself to her like an impatient lover; and impetuously running away with his bride, under the dark hills of Weem, and the braes of Ballechin, only seems to become a really sober *mari*, when meandering down the meads of the rich carse of Strathmore.

But with the very intoxication under which the poetic mind reels in the contemplation of nature's beauty, is often mingled a sigh of bitter pungency at the thought of the meditative individual, that for *his* use that beauty does not exist; but as a siren temptation, to which he must not give way, and which, therefore, only serves to make the mind unhappy, by a painful envy, as strong as the desire itself, for this or any other portion of earth's good, and yet as inevitable as the common feelings of man. "Thus," thought he, "in the Hesperides' gardens of this fair world, fruits do hang in golden clusters that we must not taste; and in the busy mart of society, or the saloons of which I have read, eyes do shoot their lightning into our souls, and make our hearts beat quick with emotion, which, notwithstanding, we must not look upon with hope; the pleasures they are designed to give being not for us. Thank Heaven, however, that the regrets that trouble me at this moment are not deepened by such vain desires as these."

He was interrupted in the midst of this unwonted sentimentality by the soft whisper of female voices almost behind him; and, as he listened, he thought he heard the light and hearty laugh of girlish youth, which soon became more distinct. A musical feminine tongue next talked near him, with warm enthusiasm of the beauty of the scene, and even, he fancied, with the joyous volubility of a happy and a light heart.

Unwilling to incur the suspicion of sitting silently as an unknown listener, he rose to move downwards, when, turning round, he perceived, a little above him, a handsome gentlewoman, about thirty, as if talking to some one whom he could not then see. In another instant, after he had turned his head, the slight figure of a young lady rushed laughingly down the hill, quite near him, and playfully catching at the bushes in her descent, never, however, stopped, until she was quite at the bottom of the knoll, and, in the giddiness of her spirits, had nearly fallen, in her haste, among the thick grass of the park. Turning round, and looking upwards,

towards where the elder lady still stood, her eyes fell upon Hector, whose look of sudden admiration was at once rivetted upon her. Blushing slightly, as she looked upwards, she seemed to hesitate in some intended speech.

"Come straight down, Madame Teenie," she at length said, with playful freedom. "'Tis a delightful run, and the grass is as soft as a carpet. If your high-heeled shoes are ready to topple you over, hold well by the bushes in your way, and I will up and help you."

A sudden thought struck Hector. Taking two or three steps upwards, to where the hesitating lady stood, he presented himself before her, and, pulling off his bonnet, begged the favour of being allowed to assist her in her descent.

The gentlewoman smiled condescendingly as she cast her eye over Hector's person, and refused the proffer. But the repeated thanks and smiling looks with which the refusal was qualified, convinced him that his offer was, at least, no offence; and seeing her attempt, timorously, to descend alone, high heels and all, he boldly pressed his suit, received her hand tacitly, and the gallant ease, and even graceful freedom, with which he brought her to the bottom of the hill, was received by the lady with that evident pleasure, with which the attention of a well-looking youth of any rank is always received by a good-hearted woman. When he had led her to level ground, she turned round and thanked him, with a smile and courtesy as respectful—as he said to himself afterwards—as if he had been a lord; and, to his astonishment, even the young lady who had first fixed his admiration, gave a blushing smile as he came forward, and took madam by the arm, as if, (though he would not allow himself to think it,) she almost could have wished that the transient gallantry had been shown to herself.

Those who still remember with pleasure the delight which, in the first freshness of youth, they have received from similar incidents, can conceive the rapture with which Hector followed with his eyes the forms of the ladies, as they receded away among the picturesque clumps of the noble lawn of Taymouth. The face of the younger was charming, beyond any thing he had yet seen in a female; and her manner, as far as he had just witnessed it, was as playfully simple, as if she had been but a lowly maiden of his own hills. His fancy being now fully awakened to the beauties of the female form, he thought, as he still stood rivetted to the spot, that he had never seen an air so noble, and yet so graceful, as he now contemplated; as, hanging on the arm of her companion, and talk-

ing and laughing as she went, this pretty stranger tripped on over the smooth lawn towards the mansion. Starting forward, he watched them at a distance, every step they went—and he even felt no slight twinge of a new species of pain as he perceived a gentleman issue from another walk, and, with many bows and some familiarity, take the arm of the object of his admiration, and conduct both ladies round the western tower, towards the front entrance of the castle.

CHAPTER XV.

Ladies, a general welcome from his grace
 Salutes ye all. This night he dedicates
 To fair content, and you: none here, he hopes
 In all this noble bevy, has brought with her
 One care abroad; he would have all as merry
 As first-good company, good wine, good welcome,
 Can make good people.

SHAKESPEARE.

IN the morning Hector arose fresh and cheerful. As he wandered, alone, through the extensive pleasure-grounds that surrounded the castle, many a look he cast around among the clumps of the park, to see if he could catch a glance of her whose face and form had been the means of so exciting his fancy. But no indication appeared of such good fortune; and, beginning to feel that exhaustion of spirits that always follows a ferment of the mind, he was returning to the castle, when, coming round towards the front, just as his eye fell on the principal entrance, a gay crowd began to issue forth. Gentlemen appeared with hat in hand, according to the formal manners of the time, leading out ladies by the tips of the long-gloved fingers, each bowing to the other as they went, like the antique figures which are represented in the old pictures of a promenade in the Mall of St. James's Park in Garrick's days, that is, shortly after this very time. All were in full dress for a ceremonious walk before dinner, and Hector, never having before seen so much of English manners and high company, gazed upon the full, round-skirted coats, wide sleeves, dollar-sized buttons, and high-heeled shoes, of the men, with amused curiosity, from the strong contrast which their stiff and wigged figures, and the gaudy colour of their dresses, formed with the free, manly costume of the few Highland gentlemen who mixed among them.

But the full disguise, and the successful misshaping of nature, seemed still more perfect in the *making up* of the ladies, who now graced this high-day promenade. This being the first time that Hector had ever seen the true effect of a

hoop, or witnessed a regular built head-dress of the *haut ton* of the time, he contemplated both, as the dames sailed towards him, with that mixture of astonishment and questioning, with which we vainly try to look with admiration upon some indications of the wisdom of our ancestors. Could these "mortal shapes," he thought, who appeared to be almost cut into two in the middle, and to have no limbs, "be formed in the same mould with the full-formed maidens of the hills?" Pope speaks of the difficulty of compelling the high dames of those days to acknowledge the shapes which nature had given them, and proposes to the painters of the day to make their Helens from the handmaidens who waited upon the others. Probably this is the best rule even in our own times, but to Hector the subject appeared invested with a mystery, which was like the mystery of that comparative greatness, which had cost him such envy on the previous day, and of that difference between one man and another in the usages of the world, which is the most difficult of all the lessons that youth has to learn.

Placing himself behind a tree, that he might not be observed, Hector watched the passing of this elegant company. The avenue into which they had now entered was broad and magnificent, falsifying, in its noble character, the assertion of the cynical traveller, who was said to have traversed Scotland, and left it without ever having seen a tree. The whole breadth of a gravelled way, about as wide as those in the Dutch-planned gardens at Hampton Court, was taken up by three couples, walking abreast, the hoops of the elaborately dressed dames keeping the men at a good arm's length on each side. Nevertheless, the whole, as they came forward, formed a goodly and imposing show; for the dresses, if deficient in grace, were well calculated for grandeur of effect, and spoke well for the hospitality, as well as the spirit, of the noble owner of this magnificent demesne. Entertained, though humbled, by the sight of so much grandeur, Hector yet strained his eyes to obtain a view of one who had made so deep an impression on his mind. In the third row of the party, and, fortunately, on the side next himself, he observed her slender and graceful figure, more elaborately furnished forth than on the day previous; and though not yet deformed by a hoop, still, so metamorphosed by the enormity of full dress, that nothing but the sharp eyes of love, which had seen her in an apparel more consistent to nature, could possibly have recognised her. Holding up a large fan in her hand, which it seems was prescribed by her quality, her arms covered with large elbow gloves, and a blown rose

placed above her stomacher, while the want of a hoop was all but made up by the numerous tucks and flounces of a rich thickly flowered damask gown, such as our grandmothers wore, she carried herself with all the grace of her age, yet with all the dignity of a lady of sixty; and, had her face not told for her a better tale, looked like those stiff portraits of young females of the Dutch school, wherein the eye seems almost disappointed that the antiquated dress is not borne out by starch and wrinkles.

But one glance of the fair youthful countenance, and the large laughing intelligent eyes, convinced our Cimon behind the tree, that no art can destroy the irresistible fascination of beauty, and her very motion and manner, as she walked and talked occasionally to the happy gentleman who escorted her, and which our youth watched with the intensest interest, was such as, in spite of her costume, to deepen all the impressions which the brief interview of the previous day had given him concerning her. Of this company, however, his own patron, Glenmore, did not seem great enough to make one; for certainly he was not present, and an unbidden pang of the humiliating melancholy of the previous day shot through Hector's heart, as, unknown and unnoticed, he saw these grantees pass, and watched the gay company as it receded away in the long sweep of the avenue.

What a strange sentiment is pride, in connexion with such a being as man! How rooted it seems to be in the blood of some natures! How, in that case, it flies in the teeth of *circumstance* itself, with which only, in the estimation of the world, it has aught to do! Of how many virtues is it not the parent, for all that is said against it! Yet, of how much suffering is it not the cause, in all situations of life, more or less resembling those in which our youthful hero now found himself! But when, to the perception of, and the disposition to, the great and the noble in human position and feeling, is added also an intense perception of the elegant and the pleasurable, what havoc does it not make in the sensitive mind! Of what bitter murmurings against blind fortune, and even human existence, is it not the origin! What food for reflection is connected with it, and with the nature of society which so madly juggles with it, is afforded in the common occurrences and obvious remarks to be made about a great man's house!

All day Hector wandered about Taymouth valley, delighted as far as nature could sooth his senses, but miserable as far as art excluded him from the pale of her pleasures.

In truth, notwithstanding the profusion and waste that he saw scattered around him, he was actually in danger of being starved; for he was too low to be noticed by those who banqueted above, and too proud to mess in the servants' hall. Thus, his own pride may be said to have eaten him up, and yet it was the only precious thing upon which he could feed in secret satisfaction. What the laird's business could be with the earl he knew not, but since his first arrival at Taymouth, he scarcely had seen him. He had no one at hand to whom he cared to express the thoughts which oppressed him. Around him all were gay, and all seemed happy, but his neglected self. Thus, he fed in secret, on hoped-for happiness, and the triumphant pride of better days to come, while yet he almost perished for a mouthful of bread.

As far as he could see all day, every servant had been in a bustle at the castle, and, as evening drew on, every thing seemed prepared for a grand entertainment. Carriages were seen bowling down the avenue with additional company. A band of musicians had arrived all the way from Edinburgh; the great hall above was hung with festoons of flowers and green boughs. Hector's inquiries for the chief, or any one he could speak to, made of the servants who bustled without or in the passages, were spoken in vain during the exciting confusion; for, in the cry of "The company! the company! the Earl, and the Earl's friends!" every voice was drowned, and in *their* wants and *their* service every thought was absorbed.

"Surely," said Hector to himself, as he lingered cold and exhausted without, "man is a wretched animal, who knows nothing of self-respect, and less of justice to others. His nature seems a compound of the spaniel and the tiger; for he seldom can comport himself as the equal of his species, but must have one to tyrannise over, and another to worship. And yet he is an extraordinary being," he continued, as the roar of Highland merriment began to rise on his ear from the banqueting hall above, "to invent such enjoyments out of the simple furnishings of the earth, and so to fence himself round by laws and opinions, that he shall be enabled to gratify the worst propensities of his nature, if he pleases, and to gorge himself beyond what that nature can bear, while thousands around him are looking on at his excesses, with the sunken eyes of over-laboured want, and with the voluntary yearnings of an unsuppressible conviction of personal injustice."

Anon, the long windows of the hall began to be lit up;

forms appeared casting their shadows across the light of the windows—the painted 'scutcheons on the ceiling, and the gilded corbells which protruded from the antiquated carving of the roof, began to be seen by the solitary admirer below; and a preluding flourish of horns and clarionets, and the heavy thrum of viols, sounding through the apartment, showed that the company were preparing for the dance. There are sounds and sights, which, at certain moments, we cannot bear. Hector turned away, and walked a space down the long avenue.

A sweet and solitary half moon was beginning to peep, shadowy and white, over the double-peaked summit of Ben-More, as Hector, now out of hearing of the music that sounded at the banquet, bethought of again returning to the castle. It was few romances he had read on the hills; but romance and poetry *exist in the mind*, and he thought he now saw a romantic sight. What would we have of an ancient Highland castle, and a great shadowy park by moonlight! But this is not the way that certain men talk, or that certain minds receive and cherish their impressions.

Built about 1550, by Sir Colin Campbell, called Knight of Lochaw, "ane great justicier all his time," old Balloch castle, on the site of which the present Taymouth stands, was of that character of feudal buildings which might well impress a mind like Hector's, as it now appeared by the moonlight, amidst the scenery we have alluded to. Between two round and lofty towers, standing at some distance from each other on the summit of a pleasant slope, towards the Tay, ran an irregular screen of inner buildings, containing almost every variety of bastion and buttress, but chiefly occupied, near the western angle, by the state rooms of the castle, from whose long Gothic windows the light now streamed towards the sward below, mixing pleasantly with the mellow beams of the moonlight. Above, a variety of pinnacles and battlements rose from different parts of the building, with that sort of effect peculiar to Gothic irregularity, that, seen from some points they looked like a heavy mass of gloom and feudal strength, while from others they had that air of the bold picturesque, which, on an occasion like the present, was singularly effective. On all the protruding horns or pinnacles of the battlements above, or the buttresses below, hoary as they now were with time, and in some parts particularly dilapidated, the beams of the moon now rested with striking effect; and, together with the festive echo of the music from within, as Hector again drew near, seemed to him like what he had fancied of absolute enchantment.

By the time he again stood under the long windows of the banquetting room, every lady and lordling then in the castle seemed to have joined the gay company, and were now in the high zenith of the dance. All within was light, grandeur, beauty and festivity. The hall rang and echoed with a species of music, imported from the favourite land of Orpheus, and now executed with the scientific compounds of harmonious effect, such as was altogether new to the enchanted listener, and came upon his unpractised ears as he stood below in the moonlight, like the rushing melody of a fairy dream. And then, forms and figures went and came as he watched, and plumes nodded, waving their dark shadows on the windows of the hall, and time was beat by light feet and lighter hearts, as lords and ladies swam in the dance, and as the Italian music rose and fell—and some one was there whom he would give worlds to look upon at this moment; and the emotions that began to rise in his soul made his head swim with sensations new and incommunicable.

"What pleasures must not life furnish, and the great enjoy!" he said to himself, in the fulness of his fresh feelings, "when scenes which I can only see and hear, thus imperfectly, and at a distance, fill one with such conceptions of grandeur and delight! What have I yet known, or yet enjoyed, wandering an ignorant Celt on the hills, to what I may yet experience in that great world, upon which I have not even entered; where art uniting with beauty and intelligence, seems to have provided such pleasures. Yet, alas!" he added, a pang of hunger and exhaustion coming over him at the moment, while a snell night blast from off Ben Aw seemed to unite with the cold ray of the moonlight to chill him through—"how different is the condition and the enjoyments of man! How sadly does the sumptuous banquetting and gay pleasure of this house of joy, contrast with the wan melancholy of solitary misery, existing at this instant in so many places!"

But this stinging thought, which it is long before the sympathetic mind learns to check and stifle, by the stern tuition of artificial selfishness, in Hector, served, after a few moments of melancholy, but to enhance his conception of the pleasures now enjoyed by this gay assembly. Pauses and changes now occurred in the music, and half forms appeared dimly at the windows, which the enchained youth would have given what he did not possess to have seen more closely. Then there was one whose image dwelt on his fancy. Could he but see her at this instant, and who it was

she danced with, and how she looked among so many other beauties, which adorned and charmed this hilarious company! Was there no way of getting up nearer the windows, among the old irregular angles and balconies which the moonlight tipped with such romantic effect? The temptation was too great for him to stand longer shivering where he was, and "for heaven," he would try.

Stepping up to the dark shade of the narrowest but highest tower, he found the low door half open, and ascending the screw-stair within, was enabled to get out by one of those narrow doors so common in old buildings, upon a sort of stripe of ornamented balcony, which ran along the building immediately under the lofty windows of the banqueting room. Here he had a perfect view through the uncurtained windows of the interior of the hall, and the splendid assembly within; and here the indistinct shapings of his fancy, of that which he had never before witnessed, seemed more than realized by the whole scene before him. Let not him who has lived all his life in the glare of splendid dissipation attempt to conceive its first effect upon an imaginative mind, hitherto buried in obscurity. Let not him who has been pampered all his life, think to conceive the zest and the thankfulness with which the uncloyed heart lifts up the eyes in secret gratitude over the first feast. Neither let them try to imagine the rapture with which our simple youth now gazed on all he heard and saw. What ideas do the lowly first conceive of the great, when seen under circumstances such as Hector now saw this company! To the great themselves, pearls and diamonds, beauty and magnificence, are but subjects for criticism, or objects of envy or contempt: to Hector all these were now objects of unmingled admiration. From the stiff and misshapen figures which had been presented to him in the morning, he could not have conceived that high-born woman, dressed now in fancy dresses of velvet and brocade, and nature left much to herself, could have appeared objects of such perfect fascination. When, as with bare necks and arms, their eyes more brilliant than the pearls they wore, some (and particularly one whom he now could see distinctly,) turned their elegant forms in the mazes of the dance; or, as handed ceremoniously by their partners, they went and came towards the window, at which he by stealth contemplated all this, his heart throbbed in his bosom, with that mingled feeling of delight and melancholy, with which we witness pleasures and contemplate grandeur, which have been la-

boriously invented for the enjoyment only of those with whom we are permitted no fellowship.

But, however noble and lofty appeared the antique hall in his view, with its picturesque tapestry of many figures, and its massive carvings of many devices; and however splendid the show of beauty and of dress floating through the apartment, where silver and gold were not wanting, Hector felt, that to stand longer where he was, within the shadow of a buttress, the clandestine spectator of all this, was neither dignified nor becoming, however humble he might rate himself, compared with this lordly company. But she whose name he yet knew not, the youngest and the loveliest of all within, was now actively engaged in the dance, and he could not tear his eyes from her. But when, in the exercise of manly self-denial, he attempted to do so, and turned away his face towards where the evening landscape lay quiet and dim beneath him, if he looked between the long shadows of the clumps, her Terpsichore form seemed still, like a fairy, to "trip along the green;" or, if he looked upwards towards the serene vault of night, she seemed like a vision to float between his eyes and the clear face of the moon.

"What have I to do with these fancies?" he at length said, impatiently, as he started out of his hiding-place—"What is she to me, or why should I attempt to think of any one of her rank? But, after all, this is no place for me;" and stealing hastily along, a sense of the necessity of concealment from the view of those within, obliged him to make his way towards the farther end of the balcony.

Setting his back towards the rugged moulding of some decayed Gothic tracery, that ornamented the outer angle of that part of the building, as he turned his face abstractedly towards the surrounding landscape, that painful mingling of ardour and regret, so common in youth, began to steal over his exhausted spirits with an unwelcome and humiliating melancholy. "Would that I could leave this place!" said he, internally—if we may be permitted to translate the reflections of a high-minded youth—"if I stay longer, I shall be wretched. To be the spectator of pleasures which one cannot taste—to be tantalized by the sight of grandeur which mocks the honest pride of nature, and turns our self-love into bitter and unnatural humility—to contemplate a paradise which to me is like the heaven which the man in the parable only saw afar off, but which was never to receive him within its portals—all this is not good. I feel that it is already laying within me the foundation of the

basest passions—envy and discontent. There is the music again! how charming it sounds from within these halls! and seems to echo from these noble groves. I shall leave this to-morrow, else every manly purpose will be lost in the entrancements of others' luxury!"

The light glare of the moon in his eyes had prevented him from noticing a small door unclosed at the end of the terrace that separated the buildings; and to his surprise, the very form of her whose beauty had so haunted him, stepped slowly forth, in the shadow, and soon stood on the light balcony quite near him. He gazed upon her, breathless with astonishment at the romance of the incident, and his own good fortune. Her countenance seemed to express some powerful emotion. He still looked, spell-bound. He saw her lean herself passively against the wall, then covering her eyes with her taper fingers, a sob rose in her bosom, that seemed almost to choke her, until she got relief by a passionate burst of tears.

"Good heavens!" said Hector within himself, as the lady sobbed and wept by his side, "do tears mingle with pleasures like these, and sorrow grow out of the house of feasting and of grandeur?"

Feeling all the indelicacy of his situation, as he still stood concealed by the shadow, while the young lady, recovering from her fit of weeping, now began to contemplate, with seeming delight, the tranquil scene beneath her—he at once determined to relieve himself from all embarrassment, which might arise from his being found where he was, by addressing her. Stepping out, therefore, into the moonlight, and pulling off his bonnet, he modestly begged pardon for being unwittingly in a spot where she might suppose herself quite alone, at a moment when any thing like intrusion could not but be peculiarly painful to her feelings.

A slight start of surprise, and a look of some alarm, was the first effect of this speech upon the young lady; she seemed to hesitate, but still was silent.

"I am most unfortunate in having offended you, madam," he again said; "but believe me, the intrusion was by no means intentional."

"I know not whether I am the intruder here, or you, sir," she at length said; "but assuredly I cannot presume to be offended with you, and yet there seems something strange in this;" and she threw a glance around her, as if momentarily perplexed by the unexpected incident.

"Suffer me to explain, madam," said Hector, drawing

near her. "It was no mean motive, such as I might be ashamed of, that brought me up to this spot. A follower only of a Highland gentleman, at present a visiter at this castle, and not, of course, entitled to mix with the company at the ball, can you blame an humble denizen of the hills, if the sound of music such as is never heard in these glens, should have caused him to linger under the walls of the banqueting rooms; and the sight of grandeur and festivity, to which he has hitherto been a stranger, should have enticed him to seek a distant glimpse, even from these windows, of gaieties which halls and saloons only contain, and of pleasures to which it is not for him to aspire."

"And was it to see the dancers, through the windows only, that caused you to mount up to this balcony?" said the young lady, with evident interest.

"Assuredly from none other motive, madam," replied Hector, "unless the moon, who debars no eye, however humble, from looking up in her sweet face, might have helped to solicit my solitary sacrifice to her fame, to divide my admiration with the beauty and grace within these halls."

"Then you had no invitation to the banquet, young sir?" said the lady, casting a quick glance over Hector's person.

"No, madam, it is not for the earthen pot to come in the way of the brass pot, as I have read in the fable. The one is apt to be, in that case, the destruction of the other."

"And you have been making yourself melancholy by the contemplation, through a window, of pleasures of which you are pleased to think so highly?"

"Assuredly, lady, it is so; and whether distance and difficulty, as some say, make things more desired, I know not, but, cold and somewhat sad as I have been, standing here without, I have this night seen and heard that which will never be effaced from my memory."

The young lady smiled slightly, and replied not, but lifting her eyelids slowly, she regarded the youth with a look of interested curiosity.

"I see you are surprised, lady," he continued, encouraged to boldness by the soft expression of her face, "but it is not for you to know the inward thoughts of conscious inferiority of condition, when contemplating beauteous and noble forms, tripping in the dance within halls like these. You are pleased to listen to my bursting confession. Can you know aught of feelings such as mine—where pride, instead of, perhaps, becoming humility, gnaws at the heart, and where a susceptibility for pleasures unknown on these

bald hills, makes even this music that now rings in our ears, dance in the ill-suppressed emotions, and stir up the still disappointed fancy, which, when it looks upon eyes such as yours, becomes almost mad with the strength of its own fires, and when the whole has fled from the cognizance of the senses, turns the solitary thoughts into gall and wormwood.

"I can conceive something, sir," she said, momentarily catching the tone of his enthusiasm, "of the pains of a brave spirit, whose desires for activity are suppressed by his circumstances, and whose purposes of ambition are constantly hindered by his condition. But I must not tarry here. Accept of my good wishes, sir; and as for what you have said, surely to the ardent and the brave fortune has in store greater things, than, in a moment of melancholy, such as you have now been indulging, may occur to the fancy."

"A thousand blessings on you, lady, for this condescension. But one word more. I have stood on this terrace, watching your movements within the hall, till my heart was ready to burst with the intensity of my own reflections. Little did I then anticipate that this night would give me the joy and relief of uttering some of those reflections in your own gentle ears. We have met by chance. I know I am your inferior, and yet you have listened to me like heaven's angel of pity, come down to receive from my lips, confessions which I dare hardly utter to myself."

"Good night, sir," she said, smiling, yet almost alarmed at his warmth; "and yet," she added, turning suddenly back, "I ought not, perhaps, to go without saying something in reply to reasonings so fully confessed, and which, in truth, interest me because I hear them with surprise. I fear, young sir, in contemplating with such imaginative desire the imposing scenes which that saloon may have furnished, you have looked only on one side of the picture. Can you not conceive, that, within halls such as these, amidst apparent gaiety and festivity, there may be some feelings suppressed and others excited, which the wretched individual is ashamed to own, and which change almost into hideousness the heart which is the subject of them, making a real torment in the midst of banqueting and festivity? While you seem to envy that, of which you only know the exterior, can you not suppose it possible that there may be heart-burnings suffered within halls such as these, so consuming and so intolerable, that the subject of them would at times gladly exchange situations with the menial that stands behind his chair, and would give all the artificial en-

joyment of this banquet for one bound of the free and light heart, upon these wild yet noble hills that surround us?"

"Lady," said he, catching the strain of her feeling, "did not I see you yourself this night in tears, even on this spot?"

"I confess it, if that may illustrate my meaning. You, sir, have drawn one picture; let me draw another. Take one of the youngest ladies in that hall; let her heart be warm, and her feelings ready to respond to every noble sentiment; but let the maxims of the world, adopted by a beloved parent, and a sense of duty never to be set aside, place her in circumstances with relation to one in that apartment, whom, the more she knows the more his presence repels every sentiment of her mind, and every preference of her taste. Let him haunt her with an eye of jealousy, and a selfishness of passion, that knows neither delicacy nor sentiment, until its tyranny grows into rudeness, and its grossness into an insult. May there not, then, occurrences grow out of a case like this, which well may cause tears to flow in secret, and even be an enjoyment; where music rings in the ears without bringing pleasure, and grandeur floats before the eyes without affecting the consciousness or removing bitterness from the heart? Now I have drawn you another picture from your own. Think of it, sir, and let it help you to greater contentment with your condition; and so good night."

"Madam," said he, highly interested by her speech, "I am unable to give expression to what you make me feel at this moment; could I believe that"

"I have already said, perhaps, too much, sir," she continued, interrupting him; "I will say good night, for I must not remain here."

"Good night a thousand times;" and becoming bolder, he took the hand that she waved, and pressed it to his lips.

"Now, sir, pray, not a step farther," she added, holding up her arm authoritatively, and gliding backwards down the shaded terrace, and mounting the steps which led to the door, in a moment after she had vanished from his sight.

He just saw the little door opened stealthily in the distance, and closed behind the fair vision. He looked around, and saw the terrace a dark blank of emptiness as before, and the moon above shining calm and cold on the shadowy landscape beneath him. He could scarce believe that he had been awake, when, with a tumult of strange emotion, he again threw back his thoughts on the scene that had come so unexpectedly before his senses, and had now vanished like a dream.

CHAPTER XVI.

Nothing remains, but that I kindle the boy thither, which now I'll go about.

SHAKESPEARE.

FROM the excitement of the foregoing scene, together with his long fast, Hector, on descending from the balcony, found a feeling of exhaustion come over his spirits that obliged him to enter the mansion, with the view of obtaining a morsel of food. The bustle of the early part of the evening was now subsided; the elder part of the guests at the castle were leisurely taking in vinous intoxication above, while the younger were still enjoying the dance, and the servants having by this time also "taken in their malt," in no stinted measure, were lounging about the passages looking for adventures, or dancing Scotch reels among themselves in the lower apartments.

Of these, Mr. Andrew Trotter, the chief butler and key-carrier at Ballock castle, an elderly Lowland-spoken man, with a square-cut head, tastefully whitened with powder, was of course the greatest man in the establishment, and far more to be honoured than the Earl himself. Besides, the old man being shrewd and confidential, was allowed to be in waiting among the company above, when all the ordinary "clanjamfrey of flunkies," as he called them, were driven out of the room; so that he had frequent opportunity of hearing all the conversation, and many of the family matters of the ancient house of Breadalbane; and being a man who kept his ears always ready cocked, and never opened his mouth but when it pleased himself, he was held in great respect and confidentiality both above stairs and below; besides being a walking repository of the family concerns, of which he contrived always to appear to know a great deal more than he really did.

All these advantages over the higher and lower powers of the establishment, might, by the cruelty of fortune, have

been turned some day against Mr. Trotter, and he be hurled from his high estate, but for one qualification he had, which might be recommended to the imitation of still greater men. This was, merely, the seeing and appreciating a proper distinction between what was done or said by "the quality," and by other people. Having been in the habit of waiting on "gentlemen" at all times and seasons, and, in particular, of putting himself in their way when their tongues were loosened by drink, and they talked things which ladies ought not to hear; and which, as he said himself, there was no necessity for telling to the minister, he had formed a code of morality of his own, which exactly suited "the gentry," and is to be found, more or less pure, in all the liveried fraternity, even unto this day. Considering it not to be controverted, that "the quality" were a distinct species of the human race, who were made to be served and worshipped by all those whom they condescended to rule over, Mr. Trotter believed, on his soul, that a nobleman's vices were more to be honoured and attended to, than another man's virtues; so that the old man was, as usual, more valued for his doctrine than his practice; for the former being known to be sound, a few slips in the latter were not to be spoken of, and were even all the better for the love that was borne him for his doctrine's sake.

It was not to be expected that so great and so wise a personage should take any notice of such as Hector, coming, as he did, without any particular marks of gentry upon him, except, perhaps, his looks and his bearing, and what might have been indicated by his conversation, all of which are, of course, nothing at all, as the world goes. Mere negligence on the part of M'Evan having consigned our hero to the uncertain chances of a great house; to be neglected by his superiors was a sufficient reason why he should be sent to the wall by those whose business it was to imitate, in a small way, all that they did. But circumstances had occurred in Hector's absence this day, which began to change all this.

"Hoo do ye do, sir?" said Mr. Trotter, nodding condescendingly, as he met Hector in an aristocratic part of the passage.

"How do you do?" responded Hector, cuckooing a species of address not then very common in the north.

"I've been looking for you, sir, this whole evening," said the major-domo, with a respect which naturally astonished our youth. "You were not here about the dinner-bell, I trow."

"No, Mr. Trotter, will you please to order me some refreshment now?"

"That I will, sir, with the greatest of pleasure. Just step in here, and I will see about the eatables mysel, and serve the drinkables wi' my ain hand."

"What can all this flattery mean?" said Hector, mentally, when the old man was gone. "If it bodes no good, ultimately, it promises, at least, a good supper in the mean time, and that is something."

"A couple of servants, (the same who had, on the former day, helped to insult him in the common hall,) soon entered, their faces "in a breeze" of drunken good-humour, and bowing politely, absolutely surrounded our hero with dishes, most of which had come untouched from the great banquet above. Anon entered Mr. Trotter himself, followed by his servant, bearing a tray, which jingled with glasses and bottles of red brandy and white Hollands, besides a silver tankard, with a springing deer on the lid, which bore between its horns the agreeable label of *claret*.

"Am I the same person I was yesterday?" said Hector, internally, as he surveyed all this, "or is this but a trick, such as the proud lord in the English play-book is said to have put upon Christopher Sly, only to make me feel after insult more deeply?"

"Noo, if there isn't enough here to stay your stomach, young maister, say my name is not Andrew Trotter," said the functionary, arranging the dishes before him in a scientific manner. "Why, man! when I see you at the light, ye look as pale anoth the gills, as ye hadna tasted green nor gray since the morning."

"Neither have I," said Hector, simply, taking up the implements of assistance to the mouth.

"Ea! God keep us frae cleanness o' teeth, as the minister said to the mealman. What fore do ye no fa' to, then, and here's a drap o' kill-deevil when ye're done. It maun be pleasant work on the hills, that could keep you out starving all day, and the quality aboon speering after you."

"Asking for me?" said Hector, hastily swallowing his mouthful.

"Yes, speering for you up and down, and the laird of Glenmore, your friend, blasting and blawing about you to the Earl himsel. But stop your mouth wi' your meat, young gentleman, for deevil a word mair will I tell you till ye hae eaten twae meals in ane, and your supper on the top o't, forbye a tass o' this cogniac to put smeddum in you. But I'll drink your health, in the mean time; using that freedom

with you, in respect, that though your fortune may be gude, and your sun on the rise, ye're no just come to your estate yet. Here's your health, Mr. Monro. Ye see I only take half a glass at a time, for I'm aye getting bits o' dribbles an' drabbles, up stairs and down stairs; but thae blackguards o' the ha', that I maun keep in order, they're a' bleezing drunk already."

"Then it's no trick after all, but plain enough," thought Hector, yet not taking time to speak. The conversation, however, suffered no lack from his own forbearance; for he being just then supposed to be in the condition to be patronised by such as Mr. Andrew Trotter, the gracious functionary was pleased to extend to him his benevolence, besides making him sensible how great a man he himself was with the ancient family of Breadalbane.

"Noo just use your freedom, and say the grace when ye're done, Mr. Monro. What need ye be picking like a maiden at thae poor pigeons, whilk are as dry and fushionless as a skin. Plunge your fork into the paste o' this pie. There's something anoth it, that'll gust your gab. Come, I'll take this lang-legged chuckie out o' your way. She's hardly worth the trouble o' your 'natamizing, just eenow; for, as the border baillie used to say, a hen's a hungry feast, but a pudding's a rare degiest, I canna mind the rest o't; but just lay your lugs in that pie; ye'll may be find need o't again the morn."

"How," said Hector, "what of to-morrow?"

"Just be putting into you, and I'll tell you when ye're done," said the resolute major-domo; "and dinna be in the least hurry; so, wi' your leave, I'll take a seat to rest my shanks, and wait wi' patience till ye take your bit and your drap, as the minister says to the kirk folk, on hally Sunday."

The curiosity of Hector to know what was coming, and the real cause of this extraordinary kindness, certainly induced him to use all possible despatch; and soon laying down his knife and fork, he asked for a draught of ale to wash down the eatables, and to show that he had finished his meal."

"The deevil ae drap o' broust ye'll get out o' my hand the night, Mr. Monro," said the man of keys, in rather a pe-remp-tory key. "There would be sma' sagacity in my betting a wager on the head o' gentle or simple, that would call for yill, when there's brandy and Geneva before him, forbye red claret in the magnum, as clear as a lawmore bead."

"Betting on my head, Mr. Trotter. Is that what you say?"

"To be sure. What's the use of fighting or fencing, if there's no a bit canny bet on the head o' the favourite o' the day, and so ye think I canna birl a guinea at a wager—ay, or *ten* either, as weel's ony laird in the ha'! But, faith, as I said before, I'll ne'er risk my siller on ony man that would beg himsel wi' sour swats, as lang as he could lic his lips after red claret. That's my creed."

"Fill up, then, good Mr. Trotter," said Hector, thrusting forward one of the long grenadier glasses then in use, "I will do any thing in reason, so that you will tell me the meaning of all this exordium."

"Weel, sir, as I was waiting upon the quality aboon, they had their cracks about the news o' the time, and about King George up at Lunon; and how that, though his majesty is a passionate body, and when he's in an anger flytes like a kailwife, and kicks his hat and wig about the floor o' the auld palace at Saint James's; and then he'll swear, they say, like a German porter; yet in family affairs, at least, he's an exemplary man, and lives costy and cannily wi' his ain wife, and as for ony by blows—that is, concerning certain court ladies that are said to be his mistresses—why the gray mare, after all, is weel kenn'd to be the better. . . ."

"Dear me, Mr. Trotter, how does this gossip about his majesty relate to me?" interrupted Hector. "I hope you will remember the point in hand——"

"Noo, young gentleman," said the chief of the butlers, with all the energy of drink, added to the habit of inferior rule, "I warn you to beware how you break my thread. I'm just like a loch-leach, if you let me stick, I'll stick; but if you take me aff, the deevil a bit ye'll get me on again."

"Well, Mr. Trotter, just go on in your own way."

"Noo, that I call sense. Weel, about King George and his mistresses, and his father's mistresses, and a' their mistresses, and various matters o' court scandal, which it's the part o' the quality to know and understand; they cracked above-stair the most pleasant and condescending jokes, which it's time enough for you to hear, young gentleman, when your beard grows langer than your teeth, and does not become me to rehearse. But at length the talk came a little hand-awa-hame, and it was allowed that his majesty and the Lunon folk, whatever were the blessings enjoyed under the protestant succession, did not pay that attention to Scotland, that her importance in the realm deserved. Weel, from that the conversation diverged to the contankerous and canstrary state of the Highlands, and how that the laws could not be executed, and malefactories could not be executed in de-

cency and quietness, and how that a strange fallow they ca'ed M'Naughton that was ta'en up for cattle-lifting and hame-sucken, had been fished out of Perth Tolbooth nobody could tell how, and was now living in some glen in Breadalbane, and setting the puissant law, and the whole lords o' justiciary, and the lords o' session, and the Lord Breadalbane, my master himsel, and every other lord at black defiance; and so never looking o'er his shoulther at one of them, the auld reiver lived there as if he had never heard o' the hangman. Then came talk about the Black Watch, and how they were sure to take care o' the hills, and how there was naething but gentlemen to be the common men, and how that twa gentlemen lads of the name of M'Pherson, whilk were the brag of a' Breadalbane, had joined them. And how that they were such clever fellows at handling the broadsword—and so came a conversation about the cleverness of the Highland lads, and ilka ane behooved to brag about wha was the best swordsman that he knew; and at length and lang, the laird of Glenmore, being a wee thought dizzy wi' the drink sup, nae doubt, swears in the face of my Earl, that he'll produce a youth hardly nineteen, that'll beat at that weapon any grown man within the laird's ha'. Then up gets the Earl wi' a thump o' his fauded neeve on the table; and he swears an oath, as a nobleman ought, that he'll pit young Saundy Crombie, that's the Honourable Mr. Crombie, as he's called, the son of Lord Libberton, against ony swordsman that can be produced by ony gentleman at the table. And so the braggadocia went round, and you were praised by the laird of Glenmore to no allowance, and asked for all over the castle, and the Honourable Saundy Crombie, as we call him, coming in at the time—for he had gotten the begunck frae some lady at the dance—he took up the talk, and swore and blasted that he would fight ony man at the broadsword frae Kilsyth to Killdrummy; and then it was made up, that you and he were to fight a sham fight to the drawing of blood, or the showing of swordsmanship, to-morrow, at two hours after noon; and the laird has been seeking you all over the castle to tell you the matter. What do you look sae dour for noo, Maister Monro?"

"This is a strange tale, Mr. Trotter."

"It's a very good tale, sir, and very much to your credit," said the functionary, with a confident consciousness of drunken good sense, "and ye need not fauld your arms across your brisket like an Angushshire piper. I ken what I'm saying."

"I do not doubt your word, Mr. Trotter; but I think they

might have consulted me before they appointed me to a show of this kind. I do not choose to be made an exhibition of for the pleasure of any set of men over their cups."

"Then if that is the way you talk of the quality, Mr. Munro," said the major-domo, starting to his feet, "I have no hopes of you. I tell you what, sir, I've lived nearly threescore years in the world, and never knew a man prosper who crossed the will o' the quality o' the land, or spoke against the kirk or the minister."

"I am bound to pay respect to your experience, Mr. Trotter, but I cannot help my feelings, on being thus made the subject of undertakings in which my own consent has never been asked."

"Then ye'll no fight, Mr. Monro, is that it?"

"I did not say that; but I think there might have been that respect paid to me before the paction was made as to——"

"Hoogh! if it's naething but a bit flaught o' Highland pride," said the shrewd servitor, resuming his seat, "it'll blaw by, and ye'll win honour and renown yet, afore the ladies, and I'll win my ten gold guineas."

"Before the ladies, Mr. Trotter! is that also in the bond?"

"For certain it is. Do ye think there could be a flourishing o' swurds, and a showing aff o' bodily cleverness by young men on the greensward without the ladies being to see it? And there's ane o' them, a bit young thing o' the quality, the sweetest creature—ooh, man!—her vera een, when she looks at you anoth the bonny hassock o' hair that twirls rounds her brow, would turn an auld man's heart young again. But ye've seen her, and she has seen you, too, lad. I hae an ee in my neck."

"What can you mean? who has seen me? You surprise me more and more, Mr. Trotter."

"Ooh, to be sure, ye'll be surprised, as if ye didna ken what I was speaking about. But I'm an auld sneck-drawer, and hae lang lugs; and so ye see, when I was up stairs yesterday, poutering at a bit stain on the tapestry on the wrang side, wha shuld come whisking through but Madam Teenie, as she's called, and Miss Helen Ruthven; and the young thing joked madam about how a Highland youth had helped her down some hill in the park, high-heeled shoon and a',—meaning you, Mr. Monro,—as featly as if ye had been a lord; and the lady cackled like a clocking hen at the thoughts of your flattering Highland gallantry, and praised you up, nae-doubt; but the young ane was a

wee thought jealous, I could see that. And then, after that, Jenny, the bit primped-up lassie that dresses the ladies in the morning, she behooved to cast herself in my way this forenoon, after the quality had gaen out to the promenade, and she began speering sly questions at me, and came round about, and round about, until she began to inquire about you, and what was your name, and where ye came from, and every thing. I kend it was just to tell her lady, and I said so to her, and the young baggage turned red in the face. O, thae women! thae women! I hae been lang used to their tricks."

Hector could not help smiling, but almost turned "red in the face" himself, on hearing of this flattering interest taken concerning him; although, as he considered a little, his brow again darkened down at the idea of all this his present freedom and confidence, even with the chief butler in the house of Pharaoh. But the occasion was too tempting for the gratification of his curiosity by means of the talkative old man, and he determined to go on.

"Then I will not go round about and round about, as you say," said Hector; "but straight forward ask you to oblige me by telling me all you can of this young lady. I confess I have noticed her; and if she has gained your admiration so highly, it is naught remarkable that she should have also gained mine."

"Odd, it's little that I can tell you," said the man, "but that she is an only daughter, and, I believe connected with gentry of high quality; and ye may admire her as ye like, but it maun be at a distance, much as I do myself; for it is roundly said, that she is trysted by her father to marry the very gentle that has undertaken to fight you wi' the broadsword the morn. How his honour, young Crombie, has learned to be sic a champion, I know not; for though he has great lands in the Highlands, by right of his mother, who was a Campbell, his life has been mostly spent in the Lowlands, where he was born, and where, no doubt, the breadth and width of his father's estates, besides the title, he being the eldest son, is the chief foundation to the lady's father to encourage this match; for well I wot, Crombie himself is no great bargain to tempt a bonnie young lassie, either for his outward man or his inner. But that's nae ferlie, for ye ken the quality marry aye for siller and titles, whilk is perfectly right, just to keep the breed up, as the horse coupers say, and the estates thegither. But I forgot to tell you, that the bonnie creature hersel is not the least taen wi' this braggadocia lordling; for he's rough and uncouth for a' his

quality, besides having big knoity knees o' his ain, and calves to his legs like an Edinburgh caudy: and the night at the ball, he *would* dance wi' her, right or wrang, and *did* dance wi' her, by her ain good-nature; but the fool overshot the mark, in his roughness, as I hear tell—and so she gied him the begunck, as I said before, and slipped aff frae the ball no one could tell whither; and that was the time his honour came bleezing into the sober company that were drinking wi' the Earl, and me waiting by. And so he came swaggering in, as I said, wi' a brow as black as night; and, being affronted wi' the ladies, he began to brag and blast about his swordmanship; and the Earl behooved to take his part against Glenmore and you, in respect he was of quality; and so ye maun draw blood o' him the morn, or faith, my brave youth, though ye were e'er so gentle, your time's up here in auld Balloch."

"I fear naught, as the motto has it," said Hector; "and I thank you, Mr. Trotter, for the information you have given me. So, as it is time that I should retire, I had better move to my own quarters."

"Would ye really," said the major-domo, in alarm,— "would ye really rise, and sae mickle gude drink before you, when ye know what ye hae to do the morn? If ye dinna drink to put strength in you, after fasting all day, where do you think ye'll be when ye come before the ladies; and what'll I do for my ten guineas? Odd, if ye just drink another caupful like that, I'll wager five red guineas more on your head—for it would gravel me to the bottom o' my stomach, to see that knoity-kneed Crombie win the day, although he *be* of quality. And ye needna be a bit disdainfu' to take your glass beside me, for the auld Earl himsel often speaks to me like a perfect brither, and whyles he and I crack our crack thegither, like pen guns. But faith, here's something to do without, and I maun rin. Deevil's in thae blackguards o' mine! the bells may ring till the tongues fa' out o' them, afore they answer ane o' them. After this time o' night the scoundrels o' the ha' nae mair mind the quality than I would as mony Kilsyth kailwives."

With this, the old man, making a professional congée, and putting his face into the true form of a good barking jowler, set off, with a true waiter trot, up the long passage.

Thus left to himself, Hector had the desired opportunity, which he soon availed himself of, of slipping off, to meditate on the events of the day, and the probabilities of the morrow, within the solitude of his own apartment.

CHAPTER XVII.

Now in the valley he stands; through 's youthful face
 Wrath checks the beauty, and sheds manly grace.
 Both in his looks so join'd, that they might move
 Fear even in friends, and from an enemy love.

COWLEY.

Celia. I would I were invisible, to catch the strong fellow
 by the leg.

Rosalind. O excellent young man!

Celia. If I had a thunderbolt in mine eye, I can tell who
 should down.

SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN great events—for events are great only by our conception of them—when great events have just past, or are just at hand—and by both of these was Hector now encompassed—how can men be expected to sleep? Accordingly, our youth lay tossing and tumbling in the little ill-furnished cell, which, in those days, served for a dormitory in such old-fashioned buildings as Balloch castle, for a long time, but sleep he could get none.

The moonbeam that at first shone clear in at the loop-hole window of his little hole in the tower, gradually became fainter, and moved farther round the wall of the apartment; and at last its light seemed suddenly to go out, like the departure of the frail spirit of man,—as if the good queen of night, weary with watching, had at once taken the resolution of retiring hastily to her rest.

He watched, as he still lay sleepless—the sound of music in the hall, and then the distant boom of merriment farther off, die away on the listening ear; and all below subside into that sentimental sort of silence, which we experience when lying awake in a great country mansion:—in such circumstances, the scenery with which we are conscious of being surrounded, seems to mix with the idea of silence

itself; and that impressive *voice* of nature never appears broken, or divested of its solemnity, even by the occasional moan of the midnight air, that, like the mysterious spirit of darkness, seems to sigh away among the distant hills, and, at the same instant, to breathe an undefined whisper at the very window of the imaginative watcher.

What the thoughts were that kept Hector awake, the events themselves will fully explain, at least as such events would be viewed in the fanciful days of youth, when every thing that happens appears of importance, to an ardent and ambitious mind. If the scene, however, on the balcony, to him so romantic and unexpected, was the subject of the most minute and delicious meditation, the events of the morrow were looked forward to, and imagined in all their bearings and with all their chances, with a natural and feverish anxiety. Not that he feared for himself, or wanted courage to face any event; but when he reflected upon the many things, that, after all, may turn the fortune of a trial like this, in spite of the best skill and effort, and contemplated the bare possibility of a failure before so many witnesses, and in the presence of one for whose admiration he would wage war with the world, the nervous feeling, engendered by a clear perception of consequences, sometimes struck home to his heart, with that same sort of impatient solicitude that so often disturbs the tranquillity of the busy years of manhood.

From that know-nothing state, however, into which he ultimately fell, and which has so often been compared to the condition of the dead, he was, late in the morning, gradually aroused by several hearty shakes by the shoulder, and, looking up, perceived the tall portly figure of M'Evan himself.

"Up, my good youth—up, and to battle, as the song has it," said the chief. "By my faith, thou sleepest soundly on a morning like this. Yet I like this refreshing tranquillity of nature, when there is so much before thee: it bespeaks confidence, and bodes good for the issue of the day: for Mr. Trotter, I understand, has told you of what passed regarding you last night, and what depends upon your skill and courage this blessed day. Now, Hector, if you gain the victory, 'twill be the first and most difficult step gained up the ladder of fortune. If you lose the day, 'twill be a sad affront to me, that, at least, I may tell you."

"I am ready and confident, sir," said Hector, starting up, and yet speaking solemnly. "And I have not been without thought of what I have to lose, should fortune turn

against me on this trial. So, although I have not the advantage of years and tough sinews, yet, in the words of Fin-larig, the son of Phadric, in our Gaelic song, sharp will be his bright blade, and steady his eye, who shall win the victory from me this day."

"Now that, my brave fellow, is both courageous and poetic, and just like yourself," said the admiring chief, extending to Hector his ample hand; "so now dress yourself with care, and leave not your best looks behind you; for, if I mistake not, there will be more eyes upon you to-day than those of the rough carls of the Breadalbane hills."

When our youth had made his toilet, with an instinctive persuasion of the importance of personal appearance on a day like this, he descended with more confidence than usual to breakfast, which he expected would be provided for him in circumstances at which his pride should not, as formerly, revolt. He found, however, the mansion and its inmates in a tolerable pickle of Highland confusion, from the effects of the dissipation of the preceding night. Of the men, it was only the hard-headed Highlanders, or the more seasoned drinkers, that were yet out of bed. The ladies were still, "to a man," in the downy arms of Morpheus. All the doors stood wide open as Hector passed, and the ill-aroused servants, who were attachés of the place, unaccustomed to late hours and certain kinds of drink, went about yawning, and scratching their towsey heads, in a manner that, as the major-domo said, was nae doubt national and natural enough for a wheen lurdans that couldna keep their hands frae their heads the night afore, but was a rank disrespect to the quality.

To add to the confusion that seemed to reign in the lower regions of the old mansion, there had already arrived a whole legion of inferior retainers, or under-tenants of the earl, as well as numerous thirty-third cousins of every servant there employed; who, hearing of the grand "feast" of the previous night, came to make interest with their several relations then in power at the castle, for the various fragments and "lickings of plates," which were likely to be given away on so benign an occasion. Besides this locust visitation of servants—servants of all sorts, who, on various pretences, had come at least to drink drams with their "gude friends" in place, and success to the noble house of Breadalbane, there soon was added to them the whole tail of the laird, Hector's friend, now provided for at the neighbouring village of Kenmore, for want of room at the castle; who,

bearing of the trial of skill that day to take place, had already swarmed down from their quarters on so good an excuse, to help off with the fragments of the feast, and increase the multitude.

Above all this "disrespectful" din of dogs and men, which already had taken place about the rearward precincts of the old building, the loud barking of Mr. Trotter's voice, as adjutant-general of the establishment, was distinctly heard, boasting away the most irreverent and tatterdemalion claimants, in language strictly appropriate to the occasion; for he, being a man who hated confusion, out of respect to the quality, contrived to increase it himself in an eminent degree, by the means he took in his puissant officiousness to restore order, and to quell this unnatural rebellion of the kitchen population. "Deevil blast you!" said he to some of the discharged claimants—for he was apt to speak unguardedly; "if I wouldna rather satisfy a leash o' hungry hounds, than I would stand here to redde the quarrels of a set o' ill-bred rabiautors. My life is not worth the living, if I'm to be pestered this way within and without. And here is a perfect crowd come round us this morning, as if the dear-meal times were come again, and this body's friend, and the tither body's oe, laying the auld castle o' Balloch under a perfect siege; while our ain quality are standing within, kicking their heels to keep them warm, and whistling a morland tune for lack o' their breakfast."

It was quite true what the old man said; for, on passing through, our hero found Glenmore, himself, and another Highland laird, wearying their morning away in an empty room, and whistling aloud to keep their courage up, while they could get no satisfaction out of a fitful Babel of Highland gabble, which they heard occasionally from the various outposts of the inner citadel of the larder. There being nothing in this, however, particularly new to them at their several homes, the gentlemen took the matter exceedingly patiently, and Hector was welcomed by Glenmore with his usual kindness; and being formally introduced to the laird of Whinilla, and received by that dignitary with much Highland state, all began now to think of "their morning" with some apxiety. At length they heard in the passage a welcome rattling of dishes, and shortly after the short pattering trot of Mr. Trotter seemed to pass the door of their apartment.

"Whaur are ye jingling to?" they heard him say to the man without, "wandering about there, as confused in the head as a dizzy guse. Didna I tell you to take in the cauld

haggis, forbye the pasty and the aqua-vite, to the gentlemen in the yellow room, and keep the wheat-bread and the moor-hens to the ladies.—But come this way, ye fule! since ye are on the road. Your servant, gentlemen," he said, following his inferior Gibeonite into the room. "Here's a mouthfu' o' breakfast at last. I maun make free to apologize for the way I have kept you fasting here; but to attend to the quality as they ought to be attended, is not in the power o' nature, especially after such a night as last."

"I am sure you have a heavy charge, Mr. Trotter," said M'Evan, with a wink to his black-visaged friend, as he began "their morning" by filling up good bumpers of the aqua-vite; "I really wonder how you can carry the whole weight of this establishment on your shoulders."

"Charge, laird, indeed! it's a charge, as ye say, that would put any other man but myself perfectly demented. There's now, since last night, some wi' meat and some wi' drink, and some wi' natural-born stupidity, there's no one, frae the scullion to the valet, who is worth kicking out of one's road; and so, as ye say, the whole weight of Balloch castle is on my puir shoulders. Nae wonder I'm brusten, keeping the blackguards in order."

Before our small company had quite finished their breakfast, and their conversation, however, the honest major-domo seemed in better humour, and entered again with a whole budget of news about what the Earl above had just communicated to him concerning the arrangements which he meant should take place for the convenient accommodation of the noble and honourable spectators of this interesting trial of skill, particularly in one so young as Hector was described to be.

These arrangements will appear in the sequel, but, in the mean time, the gates of Balloch policies being thrown open, crowds began to arrive to witness a scene in which Highlanders, high and low, take such an interest; and Hector was advised not to make his appearance publicly without, until the hour should arrive when the assembled company should be waiting for him.

During the few hours that elapsed before the minute appointed, or, rather, indeed, from the previous night, when Mr. Trotter gave it wind, the news had reached into the great valley of Glenulyon, had run along the northern side of Loch Tay, as far even as Finglarig castle, and up among the houses that studded the strath beneath Drummond hill, as

far as Castle Menzie's Hermitage, and the old town of Aberfeldy, as every body would go to see as braw a show.

"By the memory of Fingal and the shade of Catholin, the auld spirit o' the hills has not yet departed from us, although they have taken the swords from us that our fathers wore," said the poetic Highlanders of Strath Tay, as they hid each a dirk under the drapery of their plaids, and set off to see this unexpected display.

"It's a braw day and a hopeful time, after all," said others, "when the Earl o' Breadalbane himself patronises the play o' the broadsword—by which we have won so many battles, and our forbears so much renown—by a fair trial of skill and manhood beneath the venerable walls o' the auld castle o' Bealach, where the great knight o' Lochaw once held his court. And then, they say, that there's a routh of lords and ladies frae the south, that are feasting and banqueting there. Come awa, lads, and make haste, for nae doubt it'll be a braw sight."

With such exclamations of cherished enthusiasm and feudal attachment, not only did a number of the gentlemen and their tenants, scattered up the long valley of the Tay, set off to the gathering, but many Highland ladies, their dames or daughters, hearing talk of naught but fine young men of gentle blood, upon whose skill the Earl of Breadalbane had laid his wager, dressed themselves hastily in kirtle and calash, and away they would go to see the tourney. Besides this, the men of the Black Watch, officers, and rank and file, (for they were but little distinguished on their own hills,) taking an immediate interest in a trial like this, flocked in hundreds down the valley of Glenlyon, and the Earl himself was really astonished when he observed the bands of the Gael who crowded the long avenues of the delightful pleasure-grounds of Taymouth.

The appointed hour now drew nigh, and a crowd already waited at the place named, such as never before had been seen under the hoary walls of Balloch castle. The spot chosen was a green hollow, nearly circular; for overlooking it was a series of those gradual undulations which makes the grounds of Taymouth valley so picturesque; and, on the opposite side, rose a low, crescent-shaped knoll, on the top of which the Earl had erected a large old-fashioned marquee tent, which Mr. Trotter had unrolled from some of the lumber rooms of the castle, and which, with a flag flying at the top, and many poles and props to keep it in form, now made quite a picturesque and showy object. Within the ample area of this erection, seats were placed, as Mr. Trotter said,

for the accommodation and comfort of the quality—the ladies being intended to sit in front; and the major-domo, in his thoughtfulness, had caused also tables to be placed within, and several other comforts to be in readiness, which, when set before those for whom they were intended, were very much calculated to set mouths a watering, and to increase that envy, as well as admiration, with which the rich and great are naturally regarded by their inferiors.

Numbers were yet flocking down the avenues to join the crowd already assembled round the spot, when a splendid array was seen to issue from the great entrance of the castle. The same enormity of hoop and head-dress which had excited Hector's wonder on the day before, now excited the same in many a breast, who witnessed, for the first time, so much personal grandeur. The aristocratic assemblage was now much larger than it had been on the day before. On the present occasion, every one, except those we have afterwards to mention, who, at the time, were entertained at the castle, walked in the train of the Lowland lords, and others who were near the person of the Earl himself, and who paid their ceremonious gallantries to the ladies. Among the train appeared, with little good taste, the challenging combatant, the Hon. McCrombie himself, who, with much of that arrogant roughness of manner, so often the effect of a senseless confidence in mere birth, chose to play the champion and the hero of the day before the ladies, and ultimately to show himself to the spectators, previous to the arrival of his opponent, in a way which, while it certainly procured him some backers among the men, by no means prepossessed the better, or the female, part of the audience in his favour.

By way, however, of recommending himself, by the appropriateness of his costume, McCrombie had arrayed himself in the dress of the hills—short tartan coat, philebeg and all, and strode about on the sward, with his broadsword under his arm, very much at least to his own satisfaction. In spite, however, of the encomiums that have been passed upon the Gaelic costume, it is not to be denied, that upon some men it does look abominably ill. The Hon. McCrombie was a short, broad-made figure, whose person, though ill-formed and bony, bore the indication of great strength, and his face had the appearance of good Highland determination. But his broad black features, and the aged expression of his countenance, although he was not more than five-and-twenty, looked peculiarly ill under the flat Highland bonnet; the green tartan of his short-tailed, long-bodied coat, sat as ungracefully as possible upon his squat square

figure, and his large knees, however brawny, and now of course left in *puris naturalibus*, to be more appropriate with the usual furnishing on the skin of a very dark man, appeared beneath his thick-plaited kilt, with an effect which, even in the eyes of the mountain ladies, was far from either pleasant or delicate.

A feeling of coolness, if not of disappointment, ran through the crowd on the appearance in the arena of this doughty challenger, and many of the tall handsome Highlanders of the Black Watch, standing around on the knolls, could hardly suppress their sneering remarks, as he strutted about, waiting for his adversary, "as proud and pricked up as a piper's cock," as they said, and certainly looking in all the faces round with conscious bravery, and as conscious gentility.

"Is that your champion?" said a lady, enthusiastic for Gaelic bravery, to her husband in the crowd. "He may be of gentry, or he may be no; but I would just like to see him tryed here wi' sergeant M'Leod o' the Black Watch. If the sergeant wadna tirl the rings off his gentle fingers, or at least gar him look less like a peacock in June, I'm sair mistaen."

"And so ye are mistaen, Jannet," replied the husband of the lady, in the proper spirit of matrimonial contradiction; "so are ye mistaen, for, besides his great strength, which says he might see but a silly woman, isna the fame of Lord Libberton's son weel known, far and near, for a swordman that's not to be equalled, may be frae Banff to Breadalbane? Hold your tongue, woman, and dinna gie your havalal opinion upon what you know nothing about. But here's the tither ane."

A buzz among the crowd announced the approach of those who now began to be impatiently looked for, and an opening being made, a small party, in front of which the portly persons of Glenmore and the laird of Whinshills were most conspicuous, between whom walked a youthful figure, whose dress indicated his important station, at least in the events of the morning. These personages were followed by a considerable body of Breadalbane and Athol men, who formed the tails of the chiefs, in whose train they now, as in duty bound, walked to the trial.

When Hector stepped into the arena appointed for the combat, a buzz of surprise, in all mingled with admiration in some, and doubt in others, made him at once an object of the highest interest to the multitude, even independent of the task in which he was about to engage. A mere strip-

ling compared to the other, though tall and even athletic for his years, his fine youthful face, comparatively slim figure, and graceful, if not gallant bearing, formed a contrast as strong as well could be conceived, between himself and his thick, sturdy, swaggering opponent. This was made still more apparent, as, led forward between Glenmore and the other laird, our youth was introduced, for the first time, to the Honourable M'Crombie; for when they stood opposite to each other, and moving off his bonnet, our youth gracefully saluted him whom he was about to engage, his handsome prominent features, bold sparkling eyes, and the thick-curled locks of shining auburn, which this action displayed, made the other's dark, haughty, elderly look—his black broad features, and square Lowland wig, which the fashion of the time compelled his honour to wear, but upon which the Highland bonnet sat with an effect that was positively vile—to form altogether, an opposite to our hero, as complete as if it had been a matter of pains-taking invention.

The attention to appearances, of the importance of which Hector was not insensible, and in which he was eagerly seconded in the interval by the servants within the castle, had certainly not been thrown away on the present occasion. Since the time of his original entrance into Perth, he had never worn the kilt, and delicacy, as well as habit, forbade the adoption of it on a day like this. The trews, therefore, or rather barred and diced trousers, of the red and white tartan, clothed his limbs; which, with white silk hose and small buckles in his shoes, looked exceedingly handsome on a well-formed youth. His waistcoat was of scarlet cloth, edged with yellow, he having positively rejected embroidery; and, modestly considering the uncertainty of his birth, it was with some difficulty that Glenmore could even get him to assume the double cock's feather in his bonnet, by the argument that he could not stand before such an opponent without wearing the assumed badge of a gentleman.

But it was upon his upper garment—which, in some respects, might be merely styled a jacket—that, the picturesque distinction of Hector's costume chiefly depended. Formed of light blue cloth, and fitted close to his shape, yet trimmed all round with a variegated edging of otter-skin fur, it seemed to bear a medium between the Highland and Lowland styles of costume; but the sleeves being slashed or divided a considerable way up, and inside the arms, the sides of the open parts thickly ornamented with bell buttons, and the open interval filled up with pink satin, and hooked across by antique-shaped clasps,—gave it the appearance of a cam-

pound of the Polish jerkin and the English slashed doublet of the olden time.

How this garment had been made to assume so picturesque an appearance, it is unimportant to tell, excepting to hint, that for several of its more elaborate ornaments, as well as, probably, its general style, he was mainly indebted to a certain damsel of the castle having got her hands over it—namely, she whom Mr. Trotter had designated as “the forward primmed-up lassie,” who waited in an especial manner upon the Lady Helen Ruthven. In truth, previous to the jerkin being carried by Trotter, to whom it was originally intrusted, to Mary Morrison, the damsel in question, a conversation respecting our youth had taken place between herself and her mistress, in which, although it consisted only of a few delicately expressed inquiries, the young lady let out more sentiments of interest concerning him and the forthcoming combat than she had intended; and while the girl was, of course, no way surprised at a feeling so natural towards one of Hector’s appearance, it afforded her a cue to do whatever she could to make that appearance as interesting as possible in her lady’s eyes.

This handsome garment, however, surmounted by a sash or belt of dark green silk, which crossed his breast from his shoulder, in place of the more cumbersome plaid, and into which his broadsword was fixed, together with the trows on his limbs, and a wide crowned bonnet set smartly on his curled hair, a few streams of riband hanging over his exposed ear, made him altogether a figure at which all present expressed their highest admiration. In this sentiment even those concurred, who, from various indications of strength and years, &c., were quite decided in anticipating the victory for his opponent. But of all the assembled multitude who now gazed upon the youthful competitor for fame, there was one heart among the aristocratic company within the tent, which leaped in admiration on the first buzz of the crowd at his appearance, and which, partly from an involuntary partiality, (at least for the moment,) and partly from a disgusted feeling towards his adversary, now trembled with anxiety for the event of the day. We had almost forgotten to mention, besides his other accoutrements, our youth carried on his left arm, as well as his opponent, a small round target made of hard wood and covered with strong bull’s hide, which being studded round the edges and in the centre with the antique ornaments of polished brass, had a warlike as well as gay appearance.

But the chief admiration and interest which Hector’s ap-

pearance and bearing had already procured for him, was among the quality company within the marquee, and the ladies in particular,—always the best judges of what is tasteful in the exterior, and the most ready in perceiving indications of intelligence, and among whom, moreover, the honourable gentleman had as yet made few friends,—were loud in their praises of our young hero; but, to the involuntary concern of one eager listener, they seemed far more anxious for, than sanguine of, his success against so powerful an antagonist. The lords and gentlemen, taken quite by surprise by the appearance of a stranger, of whose presence in the castle they had hitherto taken no notice, were yet, to the dismay of Helen, from their knowledge of Crombie's swordsmanship, still more decided in their opinions in the latter's favour. To show, however, his respect for our youth, as well as testify his interest in the trial, the Earl himself rose, and descending into the area beneath, addressed a few words to Glenmore, who, along with another Highland gentleman, whom his lordship called from the tent, was appointed umpire of the trial combat. All being now considered ready, no other ceremony was thought necessary, than that, in default of trumpets to sound the charge, the Earl's piper, then in attendance, joined with another from the Black Watch, also on the ground, should set their instruments in order, and blow up a short and a pithy blast befitting the occasion.

At the first "skreed" of their popular music, which sounded over the heads of the people from the knoll where the marquee stood, and whose loud echo was sent back upon the ear from the ancient walls of old Balloch, the whole people of the assembly began to cock their ears in Highland enthusiasm, and every man present who had a claymore by his side, seemed ready himself to spring into the arena.

"He'll do yet! he'll do yet!" cried the thin voice of the major-domo, to another half-gentleman like himself, as, standing under the tent, he watched the kindling of Hector's eye. "I've wagered ten gowd guineas on his head! and I see he'll do yet. It's no that I'm feared for the penny siller, but it would spite me to the bone to see that bonnie young lad, that the lady has fa'en in love wi', o'ercome and affronted wi' that haughty Lowlander. Deevil a bit but his honour is an ugly creature, although he be of quality. If it wasna that he's of gentles' bluid, and the born son of a Lowland lord, auld Nanze Mowat, the tinkler's widow, has a son that is a perfect prince to him."

With regard to Hector, who now stood ready for the trial, it is not to be denied, that all this preparation, and the so-

lonnity of the presence of such a multitude, to witness efforts of skill which never before had been shown in public, had their effect both upon his nerves and his native modesty, to increase his own anxiety as to the result of the contest. Had Glenmore considered well what human nature was, he would have paused before he put the feelings and presence of mind of so mere a youth to a test so severe, as risking his reputation and, perhaps, his whole after fortune, upon a trial, where so many eyes were upon him, that their very number and the importance of the opinions of his witnesses, with the solicitude he must feel in consequence, might unnerve his arm and take the quickness from his eye, and be productive of naught but defeat and misfortune. That Glenmore himself felt this, when it was too late, was evident from the anxiety with which he watched the countenance of Hector, and the eagerness with which he conveyed to him his instructions and exhortations. Had he known what was passing in the youth's bosom, in reference in particular to one who watched his bearing with the most intense solicitude, he would have perhaps felt still greater anxiety as to the result of the day's trial.

The last blast of the stirring piobrachd was now nearly blown. The two youths stood eagerly eyeing each other. The ladies within the tent participated more than any in the general interest for Hector, and while the pipes were playing, a gentleman behind wove a bushy crown of laurel, which it was arranged should be placed on the head of the victor, by the youngest lady present. Who that lady was, we need hardly tell; and when the arrangement was announced by the noble Earl to the young beauty of the circle, Helen Ruthven almost fainted from unexpected agitation, at the additional concern this gave her in the coming event.

At length, the bagpipes ceased and the Earl giving a sign, the two young men stepped into the centre of the arena. There was a firmness in the manner, and a confidence in the look of both, which was exceedingly gratifying to the opposing parties, who had formed their expectations of victory for the combatants respectively. A profound silence now reigned over the whole assemblage, as the swords of the young men crossed each other, and eye began to watch eye with that intensity of perception, and quickness of inference and effort, that makes the skill, and gives the success, in a trial like the present.

Two minutes or less of this preliminary play, served to show the skilful among those who witnessed it, that the style of combat of the two youths was materially different;

and as both styles had their defenders among the Highland swordsmen around, this circumstance added much to the interest of the occasion. To it, however, they went, with an earnestness every instant increasing; and now the swords flashed in the afternoon's sun, their targets rung more loudly with the short skilful strokes, and the youths more frequently changed their positions in the circle.

It now began to be perceived more distinctly in what the respective superiority of the combatants consisted; and, to the farther consternation of her who, with breathless anxiety, watched every motion of both, while she held the laurel crown for the head of the victor, she heard it generally agreed by those within hearing, that Crombie's mode of fighting, aided by his great strength of muscle, would ultimately be successful. Yet, how they could conclude this, she could not conceive; for every motion of Hector's bespoke such self-possession, and such command of his weapon, and withal, such a watchful perception of his adversary's intentions, that she and the ladies around her, anticipated nothing for him but certain victory. But the handsome face and figure of Hector, and the necessary partiality that they created, had entirely carried away what judgment they could have on such a matter, while, by the men near, who deceived themselves with no such feelings, his style was considered too highly scientific, too playful, and even too elegant, for the forward braggadocio, but imposing manner and heavy swinging blows of his sturdy opponent.

The parties had now tacitly stopped a few moments to rest, and they stood in the centre, leaning slightly on their swords, and anxiously eyeing each other and the company, as if taking breath for a more serious and more decisive onset; for so well did they seem to be matched, after all, that the last *heat* had arisen in intensity towards its close, like the rapid risings of bravura music, without either party having gained apparently the slightest advantage. From the loud acclamations, however, in commendation of Hector, from every part of the crowd, not only for his appearance, but for the unexpected science he had displayed, it was evident that our hero had greatly gained ground in the opinion of the audience. Another scream of the bagpipes seconded the impatience of the people, and to it our combatants went for the ultimate trial, as if determined to end the contest with little loss of time. Crombie went in upon our youth with looks of vengeance, and obvious evidence of secret mortification at the unexpected skill and

agility that he found in his opponent; while Hector held him at bay with the same coolness as formerly, and with an evident increase of manly confidence.

The general scene of this encounter now presented to the admiring audience in the tent a perfect picture. The opposite declivities, thronged, to a considerable distance, with Highlanders, of various ranks, with a thin sprinkling of women intermixed, and a few vehicles and horses on the exterior flanks, presented an imposing and amphitheatrical appearance; for those in the front having seated themselves on the sward, to allow of the others seeing over their heads, the whole, notwithstanding their eager interest in what was going forward, stood perfectly at rest, and thus the arena was kept clear without the slightest confusion. But it was the active combatants who struggled within the circle, upon whom every eye was intensely fixed, and who, contrasted as they were in figure and costume, presented, of course, the most interesting part of the picture. Animated as he was in the eagerness of the encounter, of Hector it was remarked, particularly by the females, that, merely in the artless freedom of nature, his stripling figure uniformly presented attitudes of the most perfect grace, and occasionally some which would have charmed a sculptor, even still more, perhaps, than they did the aristocratic personages within the marquee.

But the struggle was now becoming rapidly too serious even for remarks like these; for the object being to cut off with the sword some slight portion of the dress, or at most to touch lightly some part of the body, to show by inference a reserved power over life itself, and every attempt of this sort being skilfully met by the sword and shield of Hector, Crombie's dark eyes began to flash with a malignant scowl of disappointment; provocation upon provocation seemed to have turned the trial of skill to a serious combat, and strokes began to be given, and lunges to be made, which looked extremely like a mutual effort for life or death. The assembled company were so taken by surprise at this change, that no one had the power to utter an exclamation, until a sudden spring of Crombie, and an attempt to grapple, obliged Hector to avoid a mortal thrust by quickly dropping on one knee.

A wild shout now burst from the people, unable to interpret the meaning of this movement in any other way than as "victory for the philebeg," and the cry that was raised throughout the multitude, smote to the heart of the fair spectators in the tent, with the painful meaning, that he

whom she watched so intently had suffered a defeat. When she saw him spring to his feet, however, and turning his face to the Earl and his friends, hold up his sword in the air, as if appealing to his noble audience, while shouts of "False play!" and "The brave youth in the trews!" drowned the first mistaken murmurs; her blood returned with so sudden a revulsion, of such delight and admiration, that she was hardly able to support herself on her seat.

"Again, again! spare him not!" shouted the crowd, and without waiting for a word from the astonished umpires, Hector, now in earnest, sprang upon his adversary. A few passes more showed the mastery that our hero was obtaining, both over the weapon and the spirit of his adversary. Crombie now fought with a wild malignity that became quite reckless, but his despairing energy being still unsuccessful, he found himself, after a few vigorous efforts, obliged to assume the defensive, which was by no means his forte, and Hector now pressed him round the arena in a style which elicited loud, almost tumultuous, shouts of applause. While doing this, the animated eye of Hector seemed frequently to glance to a large cockade of scarlet riband, which, with consistent taste, the honourable young man had stuck on the side of his bonnet, just over his right ear. While Crombie's arm was now extended in almost powerless defence, Hector, watching his opportunity, with a clean stroke, cut this ornament from its place, upon which a shout was set up that the contest was gained; but Crombie, with glaring eyes and clenched teeth, still continuing his efforts for one cut at his adversary, a cry from several voices of "Let him have it! give him the steel!" imboldened Hector to another aim, and avoiding a blow of the exasperated young man, he returned its intention by a dexterous touch of his point at the inside joint of Crombie's shoulder. This was the last thrust he was required to make. The sword fell powerless from the hand of him of the philebeg, while shouts of victory deafened the ears of the bystanders.

During these latter efforts, the anxiety of Helen was wound up to such a pitch, that the sight left her eyes, and her ears were insensible to whom the shout of victory really applied. When she saw, however, our youth of the doublet and trews come forward, sword in hand, between the portly figures of Glenmore and the other Highland gentlemen, who had now entered the arena, and bowing gracefully to the company in the tent, draw near to herself, the film left her eyes, a tumult of emotion raised

the blood into her cheeks, and by the time he had knelt before her, the graceful tact and presence of mind, inseparable from the high-bred female character, when called to play a conspicuous part, came fully to her aid.

The feelings of pride and triumph which shone in Hector's eyes, as he looked up in the blushing face of the noble maiden, and which also swelled in her bosom, as she placed the laurel crown on his head, need not be made a matter of verbal description. The scene was so new to the simple people of the hills, and was in reality so accordant to their constitutional admiration of bravery and beauty, that they caught its spirit with characteristic enthusiasm, and the crowning act of this interesting day, taking place in such dignified and respected presence, was followed by such shouts of exulting applause, as made the whole valley ring from Kinmore to Finlarig.

The piper of Balloch, or of Glenlyon, or of any other spot on these hills, never being *the last man* on any occasion, soon proclaimed his own presence, as well as the recent victory, by the deafening skirl of pipe and drone, in which he was instantly joined by several others from the Black Watch, who, blowing the wind into their bags, blew up such a blast while "the quality" began to move from the field, as made old Balloch castle almost dance with the din, or at least caused it to sing—if prolonged and picturesque echoes, which turned the bagpipe skirl into real music, might be considered poetically vocal. A proud man was Glenmore this day. A merry *Andrew* was Andrew Trotter, the chief butler, provider, general manager, and ten-guinea winner on this solemn occasion. "Such a day," he said, "had never been seen in Taymouth valley, since the one that the auld Earl came of age, when thirteen hunder Highlandmen played the sword and eat the feast beneath the walls, and the red wine ran in the very gutters of Balloch castle."

It was with feelings, such as youth, and love, and the sense of native ambition, and pride hitherto humbled, and hopes hitherto depressed, only can know, that Hector Monro, wearing a crown of classic laurel, and by this one act elevated to the companionship of those by whom he had never before been noticed, joined the gay company; and proceeding on with it, amidst the gaze of hundreds, and the general buzz of admiration, entered with the Earl and his guests the front portals of the castle. Bowing to the high dames, who now were delighted to return their condescending courtesies to the stripling victor, with what pride our

hero ascended the front stair of the mansion—even then called great—but which has since been replaced in the modern castle, by a staircase which is justly the admiration of all that part of Scotland.

What a gratifying thing is honour, when it comes after humiliation! What a marvellous thing is position, which at once changes a man into another being, or, like the metempsychosis of the east, transmigrates into the body a new soul, which it never knew before! When our hero reached the drawing-room—we give the apartment a modern name to make ourselves understood—although modestly removing the bays from his head, he drew himself up to a height which nature never before had given him, and seemed to breathe an air, which at the moment he thought congenial to him, because exclusively reserved for the respiration of aristocracy.

It is the way of the world always to delight to honour, or delight to contemn. Hector was now (he deserved it, it is true, in some degree) in the position of the man whom the world delighteth to honour. Honour now poured upon him, for it was the fashion of the hour, and condescension exceeded condescension. And he was grateful—like a youthful simpleton, to be grateful to people for pleasing themselves—and poured out his acknowledgments in good set terms; and the listeners were gratified, because men delight to be praised for virtues to which they have no claim; and the world seemed a new world to him, as in reality it was at the moment. But time, that pleases some, tries all, and so he found it.

There was one heart, however, that could reciprocate his feelings, erroneous as might be the origin of them, in this hour of elevation, and whose eye, although he did not know it, kindled to his, as they sat at meat, and as the major-domo himself waited behind both, and thought himself a great man “even for that same.” But “the forms of society,” that excellent artifice for spoiling human nature, kept them, still more than ever, distant and distinct; and after a night of dissipation, to which he was little accustomed, and which in reality he did not enjoy, our hero laid his head at last on his pillow, with a confused feeling of mixed triumph and regret, which referred him rather to to-morrow than to-day, for that happiness which still seems to elude the pursuer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Now I see
The mystery of your loneliness.

SHAKESPEARE.

CHANGING our scene, in order to elucidate corresponding events in our story, it was about this period that a stout athletic gentleman dismounted from his horse at the small gate which fronted one of the old-fashioned mansions in that part of London, now called Long Acre, which was then esteemed somewhat in the country, and belonged to the court end of the town. The stranger we speak of, proceeded to lift a huge brass figure, bearing a fanciful resemblance to the inverted stock of a cannon, which served for a knocker to the broad oaken door of the building, on one of the panels of which was raised an oval plate of the same metal, which informed the passer-by, that "General Sir George Lamont" was the present inhabitant of the mansion.

"Is the general at home?" inquired the stranger, of the old man who opened the door, and who stood at the entrance in all the pomp of office, with riband knots at his knees, and his head bewigged like a common council man.

The man replied in the affirmative, recognising well the stranger, but informing him, withal, that the general's pleasure must be ascertained before he could venture to admit him. A few minutes' quarantine passed in the oaken parlour below, which seemed also to serve partly as a library, being well furnished with books of the old seat of war, and vigorous prints of the famous battles of Ramillies, Blenheim, and Malplaquet, served to give time to adjust the preliminaries of the entree, and the gentleman was ushered through a richly ornamented lobby into a small wainscoted room, whose single window of various-coloured glass looked into a plain green plot of ground behind the mansion.

The bluff ease of the stranger was almost converted into

awe, as, casting his eyes round the apartment, they fell on the pale thin features, and venerably dignified look of General Lamont, who, dressed with the clean care of an old soldier—his snowy wig, neatly curled above his ears, his silk bag tastefully arranged behind his neck, and a neat, yet modest embroidery, edging his plumb-coloured dress,—rose slowly from his high-backed chair to receive his old acquaintance.

"Mr. Hoskins, you are welcome," he said, putting a long white hand into the capacious grasp of the squire, the Brussels lace hanging over the thin fingers of the former with an effect that seemed almost ominous of mortality. "You see I have been without this morning," he added, adjusting the small sword which troubled him in rising, "but it is little I go abroad of late."

"I should scarcely have known you, Sir George," said the squire, looking compassionately in the pale countenance of the general, "you have altered so much since we last met."

"Be seated, sir, be seated," was all that the baronet answered, with an impatient wave of the hand.

The two sat for a few moments in silence, while Mr. Hoskins cast his eyes round the apartment. There appeared nothing peculiar about it, on the first look, unless it might be the sombre hue that the light itself partook of, as it streamed dimly through the stained figure on the glass of the window, upon the black shining oak of the walls, and barely showed a few old-fashioned fuseses and sabres, that served, perhaps, to ornament them. A solitary bust of the first Charles, with the usual expression of the unfortunate monarch's face, seemed to regard with a look of characteristic melancholy, the vaunted wisdom of this world, contained in the few rows of dusty books which occupied a recess immediately opposite to it. Above the grotesquely carved chimney-piece, and within an oaken panel carved with equal elaboration round the edges, hung a single portrait. But that—it was a lady—was worthy to be the household divinity, which made sacred this impressive apartment.

After a few words of brief mutual inquiry, the two friends relapsed again into a silence, which seemed forced upon the visitor entirely by the awe with which his friend impressed him, and was evidently by no means courted by himself.

"I have been travelling since I saw you last, general," said the squire, unwilling to bear the burden of this silence,

"I have been even to the farthestmost part of your own country."

"And what have you seen—and what heard?" said the general, cynically, as if he expected a corresponding reply.

"I can scarcely tell you," said the other, replying very much like a traveller.

"Put down the items, for conversation's sake, and add them up, Matthew," said the general; "what will be the sum of all the travail of spirit that you may have observed among men, which prevents them from enjoying even the enviable pleasures of indolence? Put down, then, the sum of all the desires in the world that frets itself in vain, and all the care that turns men's heads gray."

"The sum of it all, general," said the squire, bluntly, "you may designate, if you please, by that querulous appellation which the old king with the many wives has made to pass into a proverb,—but the sum of it is, that all these things are the conditions and the occupations of our existence; and there is much happiness, after all, mixed through it. Nay, Sir George, you need not look incredulous and cynical, for there is a pleasure even in the melancholy in which you seem to take solace; which, though of a gloomy and somewhat morbid sort, is only a peculiar and specific modification of such happiness as human beings are capable of enjoying."

"The philosophy is growing upon you with the age, Matthew," said the general, with a slight smile, "and I am glad to see it. You say I am altered since we last met: that is very likely,"—and throwing himself back on his chair, he gave a look up to the portrait above the mantel-piece.

"You are altered, general, to my astonishment," said his visiter; "age seems to come upon you at a gallop, and yet you are but little above fifty."

"You are a blunt man, Matthew—as blunt and careless in your address as ever; healthy in body and sound in mind, as you always were," he added, with a look over the stout person of the other that was almost envious; "and yet I would not choose such as you for a physician, far less for a mental counsellor."

"Why, general, why—if I had the knowledge of the physician in addition to that which I have of your character?"

"Does the question require an answer? How can men of different mental constitutions and different experience, judge correctly of each other's situations and feelings? Do

you not see that it is the robust man presuming to judge of the valetudinarian—the coarse and brutal, of the refined and intelligent—the rich and full, of the poor and depressed—the powerful, of him that has no friend—that it is all this inadequate and presumptuous judgment that fills the world with error and injustice?”

“That is a view of the matter that deserves great weight, no doubt, general,” said the squire, struck with the observation. “But yet, as all feelings tend to extremes, it may be useful that different characters should often meet and communicate, that they may form a sort of antidote to each other.”

“Right, Matthew, and sensibly observed; and this is a good reason why such as you and I should not fall out of acquaintance, as you seem to threaten of late. But the pith of the observation consists in this, that with a sound mind and somewhat robustious body, you have also a reasonable soul, as the good book says, and no disposition to become a bigot, even in feeling, for all your limited experience. So, though likes generally draw towards each other, from the common sympathies of conflicting opinions, there is no reason why you and I should fly each other’s society.”

I take your reproof kindly, and feel even flattered by it,” said the squire, drawing forward his chair; “so I promise you to offend less in future. But, in truth, I have been wandering about the island of late, while here I find you still in the same spot, and as melancholy, and apparently fully as secluded, as ever.”

“It is my way, Matthew,—what would you have me to say?” said the general, as he laid himself back, and again threw a melancholy glance towards the portrait. “I have seen enough of the world in my time, and have no taste for rambling now, although I cannot say that I am particularly happy at home, yet have hardly strength to leave it;” and the portrait again was the object of his abstracted contemplation.

“You have property in Scotland, general, I think I have heard you say? Though the feat is not a very common one, for an Englishman to go so far north, I have had great pleasure in visiting that part of the kingdom of late. Might not your own health and spirits be improved by a journey thither?”

“Did I tell you aught of my affairs in Scotland, Matthew?” said Sir George, looking rather sharply at his friend.

“Faith, general,” said the squire, bluntly as usual, “you

never were guilty of telling me much of your affairs, either in one place or another. This observation I should have no business to make, did not your conversation with me imply considerable intimacy and interchange of thought, and a constant reference to experience—an experience, moreover, on your part, the nature and effects of which I never could fathom, simply for want of knowing in what it precisely consisted. You speak accusingly of my being unable to enter into your feelings. I admit it. But how can I, when you choose to hide from me that which it is most important for me to know. If my character is common-place, it is, at least, transparent. In you I see abstractedness, dejection, and a distaste to the world, which, not knowing the cause, I would call irrational and morbid. And yet, in all your feelings I am deeply interested, could I only speak to them with the information of a friend. My dear Sir George, is it left for me, with all my country clumsiness, to tell you, that there can be no real friendship where there is mystery?"

"Matthew, you are right—I see you are right!" said the general, edging nearer his chair;—"and yet you know the heart is reluctant to tear open its old wounds, or haply to expose its own weakness—for weakness is only another name for certain qualities of which we choose to be ashamed. Come, then, I will tell you—what, after all, is no mystery, but is sufficient as a cause for my abiding misery of mind. Five-and-twenty years ago, I married one, such as the common-place world does but seldom see. Why should I tell you of loveliness and grace! Upon the images of beauty human wit has been exhausted. To superior qualities of mind, no language can do justice.

"I was then a mere man of property, and would have been an idler, like the rest, but that I was somewhat philosophic. On this account I did not much affect common-place company, and looked for happiness on my own domestic hearth. My wife was more than man ought to expect—yet, what shall I tell you? Whence spring the ever-varying shoots of discontent? You are a man of experience, Matthew. Two human beings, living constantly together, if no other being is promised to share their affections, begin to look strangely upon each other. Something comes into their minds individually, that they dare not express, however much they may love, yea, dote on one another. The affections of a wedded pair soon require another object, or objects, common to both. If this object is long wanting, the house is not as it should be. The family seems incomplete. There is something which the heart misses, and which yet the tongue

dares hardly name. You see my meaning—we had no children.

"The sensitive and the thoughtful, as is well known," continued the general, "have a thousand inlets to misery, of which the light-minded, or rather the mindless, have no idea. My home now began to become almost tiresome to me. I thought it even became so, at times, to Henrietta. We took refuge in the hurry of society, and that made us still more unhappy. It is very certain that the excitements of company are very unfavourable to domestic enjoyments. I do not say that Henrietta and I began to look coldly upon each other; but we were sometimes less cordial, and *did* say, at times, words that were calculated to stir up painful thoughts. Those whose happiness hangs on a hair are apt to be irritable. We differed. We were discontented. And yet we were ashamed of the cause of our unhappiness. What will you have? I left my home and my lovely wife, and, with the king's commission in my pocket, went to join Marlborough, in Flanders."

"Pray go on, Sir George."

"You will excuse me, Mr. Hoskins," said the general, with a look of sudden curiosity; "but I have observed you fix your eyes very strongly on that portrait above the chimney-piece. Have you any particular reason?"

"I know no particular reason, my dear sir," said the squire, with natural surprise, "only that, in admiring that face, it just occurred to me, that, during my travels in Scotland, I have seen another that bears a very striking resemblance to it. But your story is too interesting to be interrupted by such a trivial coincidence."

"Well, but just gratify my humour," said the general, with some eagerness, "and tell me, before we go farther, whose face you saw that was like that lady."

"Why, the incident is very simple," said the squire, bluntly. "It is now several years ago, that I had made my way north, through poor, mean villages, and over blue and black hills, of which there is no scarcity in Scotland, until I got as far north as a town called Inverness. There is romantic scenery in the neighbourhood—at least, it is what the Scots call romantic, being green and mountainous, though wild and steril to frightfulness, in some parts. But I had been rambling in the better part of it, near a shapeless ruin on a hill, which the learned Highlanders of the place choose to call Macbeth's castle, when, on my return, I met with some difficulty in finding my way across the fields, and knew not well what to do. Upon this, a boy of the place,

seeing my embarrassment, flew across a field, and opening to me a gate, of which I had not been aware, directed me, with a cleverness that was almost English, into the town. My conscience smote me, as soon as I had parted from the youth, that I had given him nothing for his little service; for, although the Highlanders are very proud as to taking money for a kindness to a stranger, I was pained that I had not tried to reward, by some trifle, so fine a youth.

"The incident, however, was entirely forgotten, when, on the evening of the following Sunday, returning from another of my rambles, and again inquiring my way, the same boy answered me in good English. As I saw him walking moodily alone in the outskirts of the town, taking him aside, and asking him a question or two, I gave him the trifle which I considered I owed him. If ever I saw gratitude expressed in a human face, it gleamed in the countenance of that intelligent lad, when he touched the poor shilling that I put in his hand; and, by heaven! when he looked up at me by the dim light of the Inverness lamp, his boyish smile was as like the expression of that beauteous portrait above the mantel-piece, as if the lady, that seems now quite alive before us, had been the born mother of the Highland youth."

"A very strange coincidence, indeed—very remarkable, truly," said the general, rising and walking hastily across the room. "Yet such things *do* occur. A man like you, Mr. Hoskins, who travels about, must see many such resemblances; but they are merely accidental—duplicates of faces. Nature's variety must stop somewhere.—But did you ever see that lad again?"

"Never. He talked of going to the south, and I encouraged him in the notion; but, fearing to awaken the discontent so natural in the poor, I said no more; and I had no sooner left him, than my conscience smote me again, knowing, as I did, the poor boy's circumstances, and seeing, as I saw in his eyes, the wishes of his heart, that I had done no more to promote his humble fortune. But the occasion is past, for ever, like many others, in which our selfishness, at the critical moment, tries to raise up an excuse for our inhumanity. But the natural thoughtlessness to the cases of others, of those who have abundance themselves, is, I feel, a poor scape-goat for sins, wherein, if there was 'any virtue' to cause 'any praise,' there would be found deep occasion for us to 'think of these things.'"

"Your good *feeling*, my friend, like that which is very common, comes *after* the moment was let slip for *acting*," said the general, in a strongly cynical tone; "and the re-

semblance that you saw to that portrait was as fanciful as your sympathy, I doubt not."

"You wrong me, sir," said the squire, with imperturbable good temper. "I cannot forget the impression when I look at that picture, and I only mentioned it by your own request."

"True, sir; but what age might the youth be of?"

"About sixteen, I should judge."

"About sixteen, say you?" repeated the general, stopping short, and knitting his brows with sudden thought; "yet it must be only one of those accidental resemblances that I sometimes fancy I myself see, and hardly worth all this discussion."

"Well, then, general, pray proceed with your tale."

"Not now, Matthew, if you please," said the general, with his usual impatient wave of the hand. "You will excuse me. My nerves are not so strong as yours, and they have been disturbed, I know not how. Some other time soon, we may resume the thread of this painful part of my confidence."

CHAPTER XIX.

A lower place, note well,
 May make too great an act; for learn this, Silius,
 Better leave undone, than by our deed acquire
 Too high a fame.

SHAKESPEARE.

RETURNING again to Taymouth valley:—On the morning following the trial of swordsmanship, in which Hector earned so much renown, the arrival of the post at an early hour, or rather an express, which had been sent across the hills direct from old Dunkeld, brought communications to the Earl of Breadalbane, which seemed to create some sensation in the castle. What the nature of these communications were, Hector, of course, could not learn; neither could he ascertain whether the departure of a part of the company—preparations for which commenced immediately after breakfast—had any connexion with the contents of the letters. But excepting that M'Evan and the earl had been closeted together for some time, he could hear nothing of importance upon which he could depend.

Mean time, a species of individuality seemed to have overtaken those that remained, as if every one had peculiar business to keep him or her by themselves this morning; or that, by one of those whims to which "the quality," as Trotter observed, are universally subject, they had simultaneously resolved to be alone, or at least employed within doors, so that no pleasuring scheme of any kind, such as was usual, gave opportunity or pretence for friendly association. In this way Hector was again left to entertain himself as he could, until that great event of the day in country life, namely, dinner, should give him honourable opportunity of again meeting with those into whose society he had so recently been introduced. All the morning he

watched for the appearance of her, to whose acquaintance, if not her love, he had now the ambition to indulge vague aspirations, and ranged the park till the first dinner-bell from the turret, announced the hour to dress, without catching a glimpse of her.

Anon, however, he was led by Glenmore up to the ante-room which opened into the old banqueting hall; and here he had the felicity again to set his eyes upon the Lady Helen Ruthven, as Mr. Trotter and such usually called her—now looking charmingly after her walk, notwithstanding the stiff full dress which made her fit for company, while it much disguised that shape which otherwise was so graceful. But here, as at dinner afterwards, our youth had little else to console him but the consciousness of sitting in the midst of high-born society; for the novelty of the victory which had brought him among this company having already, as it appeared, gone off, he was but little noticed, particularly by the elder persons; and being a stranger, and of doubtful birth withal, he found himself already very much in the hapless situation of the aspiring, who have nothing else to recommend them to the favour of the great but merely their talents and their virtues.

Nor was the conversation to which he was forced to listen of that character which was much calculated to interest a mind like his, either on this or any other occasion, while he continued at Balloch castle. Weary discussions upon the politics of the time, in which the bitter feeling of Hanoverian and Jacobite opposition often strongly peeped out, especially when the wine was in, notwithstanding the formal restraints of an Earl's table, formed the staple of a species of conversation in which a youth like Hector could of course take no part. First, after the immediate news by the late post, there were the characters of the king and Walpole, and other prominent persons of the day, whose conduct and characters were canvassed in a spirit and in language which, bad as it is in our day, was far exceeded in coarseness in that time of discontent; and was such as greatly to qualify Hector's admiration and envy of the men who stood at the period, on those uneasy pedestals of public gaze, called "great place." Next was the important question of the Protestant succession, so justly the object of defence and of eulogy with all the friends of domestic peace, liberty, and improvement at the time; and upon which the Earl was enabled, by the strength of his parts, or at least the force of imitation, to be exceedingly flowing and full of matter. On this point, his lord-

ship, when once set on, urged, with both pith and power, the usual topics of popish tyranny and Jesuitical craft, innate profligacy and irreclaimable want of principle in the exiled family; garnished by the common, yet strong, epithets of anarchy and atrocity, fire and fagot, domestic danger and foreign invasion. All these dreadful things were exultingly contrasted with peace, and prosperity, now said to be enjoyed; rising greatness at home, and increasing power among the nations; a virtuous monarch, and *almost* as virtuous a people; quiet worship of God, and comfortable money-making; with liberty of conscience, and license of tongue and pen; and all these blessings ornamentally garnished by the pleasing images of vines and fig trees, hearths and altars, thrones, and seats of beggars, the judicious use of which, of course, makes an eloquent oration.

To all this, however, delivered as it was by the imposing grimace of a wigged earl, and borne out by the loud applause and louder thumps on the table, of several Lowland lords and baronets, who sat near the head of the board, the Highland gentlemen, seated farther down, said extremely little in reply; but every man, for all that, "had his ain think," notwithstanding the truth that there might be in some parts of what was spoken, which "think" the honest Highland lairds saw no necessity for putting into words on this present occasion. When the conversation, however, next diverged into the subject of the peculiar circumstances of Scotland, since William of Orange was first called to rule over it, by the will and pleasure of the English lords; and, more particularly, since "the gude for naething auld wife," as they chose to call Queen Anne, and "that greedy auld jaud, who led her by the nose"—for in this manner the laird of Glencreach was pleased to speak of the famous Duchess of Marlborough—had conspired with the needy Lowland nobility to sell the last vestiges of Scotland's independence in the shape of a union, the honourable Highland laird was enabled to "get out his breath" upon various complaints and vexations, which formed a strong set-off against the vine and fig tree side of the question. With these discontents; however, we may have occasion to be more particular when we get Hector of an age to mix more decidedly in the events of the time; but when, in the course of the discussion, Glenmore and his friends came to speak of the neglect and more positive wrongs which Scotland had suffered by English jealousy and German suspicion, during the reign of the former and present

Georges; they became eloquent in their turn, and picturesque epithets and thumps on the table, were not wanting to confirm the speaker, at least in the opinions he was defending.

In all this Hector readily perceived, on both sides, particularly on the part of the Earl and his friends, that tone of polemic exaggeration, and that reckless party assertion, which, coming in the teeth of opposite statements, is so puzzling to the ingenuous mind of youth; who, curious, perhaps, to know the truth, as yet have little conception of the considerations of interest by which it is so constantly suppressed or warped in the discussions of men, upon the great subjects of politics and religion. It is this, which, no doubt, is at the foundation of much of the disgust which the young so often take at these important subjects; and Hector, here seated, a silent and observant auditor of the talk of his elders, was often visited with that distasteful impatience, with which things of this nature are at first regarded by the ingenuous, which yet it is necessary for them to know, because in it they are destined soon to become actors and arguers themselves.

We may be permitted another didactic word; it seems an intuitive belief of youth, which it takes long experience effectually to dissipate, that the events of life grow naturally out of, and lead into each other, like the probable incidents of a well-constructed drama. Nothing, however, is more false, as soon becomes known to all, but painfully so to the fanciful and thoughtful speculator on the future. Whether, therefore, he acknowledged it himself or not, nothing was more natural to Hector, or, perhaps, we may add to the readers of this veritable history, than to expect that his triumphant success on the day of his being brought so honourably before the notice of the noble company assembled at Balloch castle, was to be the stepping-stone incident to lead to high and remarkable events.

But one entire day had not passed, until the affair seemed to have been forgotten. Thus, the novelty of his first appearance being now no more, and there being no particular reason for his getting into intimacy with any of the aristocratical guests, with whom he scarcely associated, he fell into a degree of neglect, from the Earl downwards, which, however he suppressed, filled him with a secret and bitter chagrin."

"And is this to be the end of all my triumph?" he said, murmuring to himself as he sat moodily at the table, looking at the ruby colour of his untasted wine; "and of all

the praises that were lavished on me, and of all the bright, though presumptuous hopes that seemed to force themselves on me at that proud moment? And she too, upon whose image and gentle smile I meditate involuntarily, day and night; surely this avoidance of me, as it seems to be, where we could exchange a single word as I should wish, cannot for so many days be entirely accidental. But hopes, indeed, that have no rational foundation, deserve to end as mine appear to do, but in disappointment."

While indulging this discontented train of thought, his reverie was interrupted by something that struck him in the passing conversation. He listened for a moment, but all that he could gather which interested him was that it was M'Evan's intention to return to Glenmore on the following morning. He rose up and left the table.

Stepping into one of the lower apartments, when he had descended from the eating-room, he threw himself into a chair, and was just falling into his former train of reflection, when first the thin voice, and then the short trot of his friend, the major-domo, without in the passage, interrupted his meditations. He was beginning to ask himself some questions respecting the late demeanour to him, even of that puissant functionary, when bang went the door of the apartment in which he was, and, without ceremony or civility, Mr. Trotter trotted into the room.

"Oh, it's naebody but you, maister Monro," said the upper servant, after a start, but seeing no necessity for any apology—"I hear you and your laird are about to leave us?"

It was a few minutes before Hector vouchsafed an affirmative answer to this impertinence,

"Weel, ye'll excuse me if I gie you one bit word of advice," said Trotter, taking no notice of Hector's displeased look. "But ye'll be gaun back to Glenmore, whilk is in the heart of the hills, and as lang as ye're there, ye'll be weel out of his way."

"Out of whose way? Explain your meaning, Mr. Trotter."

"Why, I was just gaun to advise you to beware how you put yoursel' in the road of the Honourable Mr. Crombie, for if I can believe his ain words, when I helped his honour on wi' his coat, whilk was turned round his wounded arm like your ain slash'd jerkin, he has a sair crow to pluck wi' you some day or other."

"Then he has left the castle some days ago?"

"Did ye no ken that? It wasna likely he was gaun to loiter here, after an affront like yon, to be sneer'd at by the other quality, and pitied by the ladies."

"If he takes a fair defeat, at his own weapon, as an af-

front, I have naught to say to it. The affair, however it ended, was none of my seeking—I was not the challenger.”

“That’s just what his honour is so compunctious about. If it had been, as he said to me when I was assisting him on wi’ his coat—for that valey-de-sham of his is naething but a *sham*, and not worth the kicking out of a gentleman’s road—if it had been one o’ the real *quality* that had coupéd him up in the duello, why, ye see, it would hae been a fairish thing; but, ye see, ye’ll excuse my freedom o’ speech, but although the honourable son o’ my Lord Libberton is nae beauty, and a dour dark fallow when he’s angered; yet he’s of a high family, and spoke very sensibly to me when I was trussing up his coat-sleeve.”

“He appears to be a man of infinite sense,” said Hector, with some bitterness.

“But what I jalouse was at the bottom o’,” continued the major-domo, “was some kitchen clashes that had gotten up stairs among the quality, how that you, maister Hector, had been short sinsyne, just a sort o’ gentleman merchant and dealer, in some chop in the old burgh o’ Perth; but, as I said, what business had they to tell his honour that! for, chop-keeper here, or chopkeeper there, deevil a bit, master Munro, but ye fought weel; and I made ten guineas by you, though I didna tell his honour that part of the story. And if ye had been contented wi’ couping up his creels, or whisking the cockade off frae bonn his lug, I couldna hae blamed you; but to stick the hon of a lord wi’ your sword near upon the clavicle, as the doctor said—my certy! it was a bauld thing for the like o’ you. It’s nae wonder that sticking o’ yours sticks in his honour’s stomach.”

“And would he not have taken my life, if he could?” cried Hector, astonished at the change of tone in the butler, yet suppressing his feelings, from shame at appearing to take offence at the impertinence of a servant.

“Why, when a *gentleman* is in the heat of a tough skirmish, and a’ the ladies’ eyes are on him, there’s no saying what he might do,” replied the major-domo, philosophically; “but, although I was well pleased to see you get the better o’ him at the time, yet, ye’ll excuse me, you ought to have remembered that his father and forbears were great people, and so held your hand. I have lived sixty years in the world, and it has been my *principle* never to let the quality be contradicted or vexed; for it’s a serious thing, and fraught wi’ danger: and so it is, by this judicious conduct and management, that I have got to the dignified place that I now enjoy, being, as ye see, master and mayor o’ this great castle—a perfect vicerent to the yerl himsel.”

"Your ambition has been high, and your reward is enviable, no doubt, Mr. Trotter," said Hector, again beginning to be amused, and yet impelled by his feelings to be serious; "and I was once unreasonable enough to hope, in the height of the praises that were then bestowed upon me, that some one of the powerful above, perhaps the Earl himself, might have taken some little interest in the fortune of one situated as they seem to be aware I am situated, after observing the pains that I have taken to distinguish myself in the eyes of such as them. But they have brought me out but to make a show of me for their own pleasure; and if your story about my late antagonist be to be relied on, my ultimate reward appears to be, to have a dirk stuck into me, perhaps in the dark, or from some treacherous ambuscade; and all for the crime of defeating, before company, a man above my station. I cannot but take a lesson from *your* conduct and *your* success, Mr. Trotter. The lowest non-commissioned officer in the Black Watch seems to be more in the way to fame than I am."

"Oh! noo I see what ye're driving at," said the servitor. "Ye're just like every raw young man. Ye think that whenever ye show a bit spunk o' spirit, and do aught before the quality whilk they canna do themselves, that they should just begin to think about you, and to trouble themselves wi' your affairs. And I would not wonder that ye've been dreaming that the yerl o' Breadalbane would just sit down and write a letter to Général Clayton, and get you made a sergeant, or, may be, a quality officer in the Black Watch. My sooth! but ye hae pleasant notions. Ye'll excuse the freedom o' an experienced man, but do ye think *the quality* hae time to think of every ane that helps to do them pleasure, or to amuse them for half an hour? That would be a trouble and a plague, indeed! and bonny presumption to be thought of. Haven't they to dress! and haven't they to hunt? and haven't they to read the newspapers, and to help the king in the government of the commonalty? Forbye, isn't there morning calls, and evening balls? and have not they to drink their wine when it's set before them? And then there's travelling here, and wheeling there, back and fore, to this quality house, and the next quality castle. And isn't there the play-house when they're in London, and the opera-house, and a' the houses; forbye the wee bits o' affairs wi' the ladies, whilk you and I hae no business to talk about!—but for a' that *they* take up a deal o' time. Oh! I know it weel. 'It's quite impossible,' as my lord said to me, with the greatest condescension, though I was then only a valey-de-sham—it's quite impossible, Trotter," says my

lord, 'for me to trot after every body's affairs.' Ha, ha! wasna that pleasant? 'Besides,' said his lordship, 'there's no end to these sort of things, if one once begins them.' But I think you are the luckiest young person that I ever heard of, for—ye'll excuse my freedom again—haven't ye sat at my lord's ain table, and drank your wine wi' the lords and the baronets, as if ye were one o' the quality yoursel? You have had a happy time o' it since ye came to the castle, maister Monro, let me tell you that. But, gudesake, ye look unco thoughtful!"

"You may be right, old man," said Hector, with seriousness; "and I can do naught but put my own feelings in opposition to what you tell me; but were I possessed of these broad lands, how many hearts methinks I would make to rejoice in one year at the small expense of a fourth part of my income. For how much talent, or how much industry, would I find a field, by the pleasurable expenditure of one-fourth part of my time, and the whole of the interest which my situation in life placed at my disposal! How much wretched *ennui* would I this way dissipate! How much value would I give to that time, which I am told is the greatest enemy that is known to the great! How many pale faces would I not change into the bright glow of health! How many eyes would I make sparkle, not only with the inward happiness of unsuppressible gratitude, but with that most delightful of all feelings, a pride in our misused and calumniated species!"

A riotous laugh broke from the major-domo, on hearing this enthusiastic speech, which, after coughing away, he was enabled to say—"God make you a lord or an earl in his ain gude time, Maister Hector. But if the quality were to do as you would have them, there would be but thin peelings in the kitchen, and thriftless pickings in the ha' for purr servants. But that day will never come. I ken the great folk better than that comes to."

"You soulless old fool!" said Hector, with roused warmth; "I will find you a shopkeeper of Perth, or even a Highland cataran who has just been rubbing shoulders with the gallows, who would do a noble and a generous action to friend or fellow, or even to the stranger within their gates, and never let the left hand tell the tale to the right, and never look over their shoulder for blessing or benizon. Would you then persuade me that the notables of the land are less capable of good deeds than the chapman of the burgh, or the cattle-lifter of the hills. I wot believe you."

"Phew!" whistled Trotter, with a prolonged whew.

CHAPTER XX.

The spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes.
SHAKESPEARE.

As he entered the little dormitory in the tower, his eye caught the withered remnant of the laurel crown which his brow had worn with so much pride on the day of the contest, still lying upon the broad sill of the small window of the chamber. The sight of this memento of an hour of triumph threw his mind back upon all the circumstances that had occurred to him since he arrived at Taymouth, and he sat down by the side of his little couch, to indulge his reflections. Many minutes had not elapsed, while thus occupied, before the sound of footsteps mounting the narrow stair of the tower, announced some one's approach; and the door opening, his solitude was disturbed by the entrance of Glenmore. From the slight flush on the chief's countenance, Hector guessed that he had something to communicate which had at present stirred up his own spirit; and as they sat down together, he asked if it was not so.

"I have nothing to communicate," said M'Evan, "that can be called important, and that is the very reason, perhaps, of the disappointment, I am willing to confess, both on your part and my own, in the result of my visit to this castle. But, first, for a word of politics, to give you an idea of grown men's talk here in the Highlands at this period. You are to know, in confidence, that notwithstanding the headings and hangings of the fifteen, there is still kept up a secret correspondence between some of our chiefs on the hills and the ancient legitimate king of these realms. What the plans laid, and the arrangements said to be in operation, which are intended for the raising of the clans and the great Jacobite families in England, are, it is not for me now to speak. But the fact being not unknown to the present

government, these things are the objects of constant observation of men in power; and so every man who wishes to please the present king, or rather to promote his own interest at court, makes it a subject of endless intrigue to procure information respecting what is going on, or at least to ascertain the sentiments of prominent men on the subject, if they should not succeed in detaching them from their Jacobite friends, and bringing them over to the Hanoverian interest."

"Now, I think I see clearly," said Hector, "the reason of your invitation to this castle; but pray proceed."

"There are strange rumours abroad, and some things that are more than rumours, particularly as to the young chevalier, as he is called in France, again making a grand attempt in favour of his family; and, indeed, I tell you farther, in confidence, that preparations are even now making for his reception in the hills. Now, in case of his landing on Scotland's shore, I know the critical situation in which I stand, from the difficulty of remaining neuter in such a contest; and Breadalbane knows it in some measure too, and has not failed to avail himself of it in his attempts to practise upon my mind. Whenever Charles sets foot in Scotland—for of that event soon there is every expectation—and when the cry of the Stuart king is carried by cross and beacon from hill to hill, and runs down through every inhabited glen from Darnoch to Dumbarton, my clan and tenantry will, to a man, expect, that I should lead them to battle against what they call the German Laird and the sour Lowland Whig, whom they hate as they do the deevil, without being particularly well-informed as to the characters of either. But I confess that, however my own partialities may run, I am far from anxious to see the present state of things disturbed; besides, I have a shrewd suspicion that, come when it may, the affair will, in the end, turn out another Sheriff-muir; and then comes the 'auld story o'er again, of the headings and the hangings; for which, be assured, I am not at all impatient. Besides this, I am neither blind to the faults of the Stuarts nor the virtues of his present Majesty; who, with no great abilities, any more than his father, I well believe to be a good enough sort of man, as kings go. Should I, however, on the other hand, openly join the Hanoverians, or the loyal clans, as they are now called, and as Breadalbane would persuade me to do even now, matters would be still worse with me, in respect of my tenantry and my immediate friends, who would soon make the hills of Glenmore too hot to hold me. My object is, therefore, to

remain as much neuter as possible, at least until things come to a crisis; and then, if obliged, I really would endeavour to persuade my relations to declare for King George and the revolution, after all. At least, I would do my utmost to prevent them from flying in the face of peace and Protestantism, for a wild-goose chase after exploded legitimacy and forfeited rights."

"And can there be such complication, after all, about what appears so simple," said Hector; "and any confiction of motives in so plain a case, already decided by near a century's possession?"

"In every thing there *can* be a complication," said the chief; "but mark me, although my *opinion* is decidedly in favour of the new dynasty, however much I may *feel* for an unfortunate king, I should not be surprised if I should yet risk my life and my estate in direct opposition to what I have now expressed. Nay, start not, Hector. I speak with a knowledge of my own character, as well as of those who have laid a trap for me, by inviting me, with a show of kindness, to this castle."

"You surprise me more and more, sir, and yet you seem to defer the explanation."

"You are too young yet to understand as you ought, the doctrine of expediency, which makes a cause good in direct opposition to some admitted principle. But this it may be useful to you to know, that often the best cause in this worldly-wise sense, is defended by the worst men, and for the most selfish and the basest of motives. I do not apply this to the Earl of Breadalbane; but as we hate men more for the dispositions they evince, through the medium of their opinions and modes of thinking, than even for the actions they perform, I am so thoroughly disgusted by the species of opinions to which I have been a listener since I came to this castle—compared to the single-hearted feudal feeling and chivalric ambition of the old adherents of the Stuarts—that rather than join my unwilling sword to that of men whose very sentiments are poisoned by the base blood of their own hearts, I would sell my life in favour of a ruined king, even though a deficiency of worldly wisdom should give him the worst chance against such enemies. I do not, I again say, speak this of the noble Earl, whose guest I now am, but rather of some others who sit at his table; and still more of many men about the court at London, which makes it a nest of the vilest intrigue, for individual power and individual gain, constantly going on by the suppression almost of every sentiment of honesty, and

the perversion of every thing that approaches to truth. This I speak, in particular, with reference to our unfortunate country, and the misrepresentations made of her interests and the sentiments of her people, to an ignorant English rabble, and especially to a monarch who is taught to believe us a nation of traitors, or a barbarous band of hill robbers, and our nobility as a set of poverty-struck hounds; the one to be trampled upon or treated with constant mistrust, the other to be bought like needy beggars, to any measures that it may answer the interest of the English government to propose for the farther oppression and humiliation of poor auld Scotland."

"Surely, sir, you are using language stronger than necessary," said Hector, astonished at this account.

"Before a few years go over, and you are come to man's estate, Hector," said the chief, "you'll may be know whether I am speaking too strong or not, or giving a false account of these hungry hounds of the Lowlands, notwithstanding all their psalm-singing, and of the disposition of the pursy pork-eaters of the south. Now, when I hear base things called good and right at the Earl's table, and low things advocated, and the sentiments of the poor fellows traduced, who would sell their lives for the sake of an unfortunate king, and the raising up of Scotland's auld head again, it's no wonder I'm chafed, and my blood boils at such sneaking policy, and it would be little wonder if they would force me yet into the arms of those for whom I foresee naught but ruin and disaster. But that is not all. I have been disappointed also on your account."

"How, on my account, sir? I should have thought myself too insignificant to—but pray proceed."

"On the night of our conversation about the swordsmanship," continued M'Evan, "I did not make a boast of you, Hector, for the purpose merely of half an hour's amusement to the Earl and his guests. But I confess I was glad of the manner in which the noble lords present took up the idea of the ploy; for I thought it might be the means of bringing you forward to their attention as a youth of talent and spirit, and, in case of your success, I doubted not that they would be most happy to employ their interest in your behalf, in a way, which, unfortunately, I have no power to do. To my surprise, however, the encomiums that were passed upon you on the day of your victory, seemed to be immediately forgotten, and I saw you falling into gradual neglect. I do not say that the affair into which his lordship seemed happy to encourage you, gave

you any particular claims upon the favour of him or his guests, farther than the interest that men of any rank naturally take in the fate and prospects of merit, struggling for opportunities to show itself. Whatever chance there might be for you, however, I determined it should not be lost; for I knew that his lordship, or his friend, lord Saughfield, whom you might have observed at the table, could as easily have obtained for you a pair of colours in the Black Watch, or at least in some other Scotch regiment, which, by services abroad, should afford you more opportunities of advancement,—I knew, I say, that they could as easily do this as I could do the most common action. And this I even flattered myself they would do readily, were it only to oblige myself, from the evident wish they have to conciliate me into an adherent of the present government. This very day I made the request, but my lords seemed first to regard me with surprise, and then, with a courtier-like smile, made me only that vague half promise, which has not the manliness of a blank refusal, but says, as plainly as manner can speak the language of artificial men, I request you will not trouble me again upon such a subject."

"I hope, sir," said Hector, "you will not suffer yourself to be chafed on my account. I can return again to the good chapman's counter in Perth, since the fates will not allow me to seek the fortune of a gentleman."

"Pshaw, Hector! How can you at your age know, for what fortune the fates have intended you? But am I right in imagining that in this aristocratic mansion you were treated with neglect?"

"It might be only my fancy or my pride—that made me think so," said Hector—"but at first, when I came here, I had like to be starved, because I would not eat in the common hall of the servants, into which your men from Breadalbane and myself were driven, as if we had been so many Highland nolt, bought at a Lowland fair; and so, because I thought myself too good for this treatment, a quarrel was picked with me on the spot, and I was fain to escape the degradation of a tussel with the common sorners of the castle, by wandering in the park for two days without food. I cannot help being amused now at the thoughts of it, and still more at the succeeding changes, for even Trotter, the adjutant-general of the servants, played the courtier in a small way, by caressing me when I was caressed above stairs, and taking a ready hint of neglect and familiarity, when my day of novelty was past."

"Well, never mind, Hector," said the chief, also smiling at this account. "Let us return once more to our own hills, and see how our warm-hearted Highland dames and damels will receive us, after parting from these cool-blooded lords, and hooped and farthingale gentlewomen, who care not a straw for you or I. What, young man! does the simple expression bring the colour into your cheek? Then it was a true reading that I read, in your face, when the brightest eyes that I have seen at the castle turned towards you. But that was in the height and swell of your hour of triumph; which, as you know, passed very speedily away, and so ought all youthful dreams like these. But although such a pretty pigeon as the Lady Helen Ruthven may build her nest in halls high above your reach, I would not have you be discouraged as to another dame—namely, Lady Fortune herself, who may choose to do you good service, even out of an affair in which I must confess I have helped to make a show of you for the amusement of your betters, to but little purpose."

"It is to good purpose, after all, sir," said our youth with animation, "since it has called from you these kind and generous sentiments. And since my laurels seem to be somewhat faded here," he continued, taking up the wreath, and crushing its withered leaves together, "we, who are a crowned conqueror," he added, bitterly, "shall give our fame to the wind, which carries all fame on its wings," and opening the little window of his chamber, he threw forth the remains of his symbol of triumph, and the cold blast from Ben-lawers, blew it far from his sight.

"You are a proud boy, Hector," said the chief, smiling at this act. "Remember, at daybreak we meet on the lawn, and then ho, for our happy Highland home at Glenmore!"

Why should we dwell upon particulars! The morning came as other mornings do come. The shelties and Donald Downie were in attendance. Our hero and the laird threw their legs over the beasts, and before the Earl or the high-born dames at the castle were astir, Hector and the chief, in spite of the remonstrances of the youth, who was strong for returning to Perth, had crossed the Tay, and were full on their journey back to Glenmore. They arrived there in safety, for the chief resisted for the present all other plans and temptations, and both were welcomed with a heart-soothing warmth, by the simple dames of the glens of Breadalbane.

But man is a being of many wishes, and the desires of the heart are not easily satisfied. Hector now looked back

upon the limited past, and in the moods of reflection wondered at it, and at himself. At Balloch castle, he had certainly seen and heard what he never should forget. But he knew not then, how many things we encounter in the world, which make their impressions for the instant, deep and indelible, and yet, in other respects, "leave not a wreck behind!" He had left a spot which would never pass from his memory, without even a word, or a look or a wave of the hand, from one, who was not suddenly to be forgotten by a heart like his. He had even passed through the great valley of Glenlyon, on his return, without ever obtaining a sight of his interesting friends, the brothers M'Pherson. Was his whole visit to Taymouth a romantic vision, which had for ever passed away? was he never to meet a certain being again? What was he to conceive of his future fortune?

CHAPTER XXI.

Gentle lady, may the grave
 Peace and comfort ever have;
 After this, thy travail sore,
 Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
 That to give the world increase,
 Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.

MILTON.

In the large old-fashioned mansion, in Long-Acre, London, to which we had occasion to take the reader two chapters back, there was one night met a small party, which General Lamont had been prevailed upon to assemble together, to celebrate his sixtieth birthday. Among them was Matthew Hoskins, who this night was amusing almost to boisterousness; but no effort of wit or imagination could rouse the general from that state of cynical melancholy which had been the habit of his mind for several years past. At length, the great heavy clock in the lobby below struck eleven, a late hour for sober people of that period; and conversation by this time beginning to flag, the few persons assembled rose to separate.

"You are not going, Matthew!" said Sir George, in a tone which fell upon the squire's ear, like the general's military word of command.

"That I am not, sir," said Hoskins, with corresponding determination.

The great outer door of the mansion was no sooner closed on the last of the company, with the exception mentioned, than the two marched solemnly down stairs into the small back study before referred to. The aged, huge-wigged servant, who preceded them in this manœuvre, set on the glistening oaken table of this sombre apartment two large wax lights, fixed in chased silver candlesticks of corresponding massiveness, which, as they were set almost under the striking female portrait before referred to, looked like con-

separated tapers placed upon the altar of the holy virgin of the church. The ancient servant shut the door, and the general, with his usual melancholy look towards his friend, silently pointed two long thin fingers towards a high-backed chair nearly opposite to the portrait, of which the squire forthwith took possession.

"I told you, when we last spoke upon the painful subject of my history," said the general, in a few moments after they were seated, "that, becoming tired of my home, from the misfortune of being still disappointed of that gift of Heaven, upon which I had set my heart, namely, an heir to my name and family, I had obtained a commission, and joined Marlborough in Flanders. And yet, bitterly did I repent that hasty step, for not all the excitement of war, or the noisy glories which I achieved in many tedious campaigns, could make me forget, for a moment, the cruel injustice I was doing that angelic woman, who, spending her prime in weary solitude, was silently mourning, at home, my protracted absence.

"How I had sped during these brilliant, yet useless wars, and what dangers and fatigues I underwent, it is not now necessary to dwell upon. Neither may I talk of how I thought and felt in our long marches, and our longer encampments—and our harassing movements to and fro, on the French and German frontiers—and our everlasting sieges in the flats of Flanders. My thoughts were still of Henrietta, wherever war led me, and my heart yearned to that home from which I had so long estranged myself, as if the possibility of voluntary return to her were out of my power. But war is a passion like any other game, and love itself was made to give way to it: but often as I mounted the glacier or stood in the trench, or led on my men to the charge, amidst showers of the leaden messengers of fate, my bitterest thought still was, that, in meeting that death which I hardly hoped to escape, I should have no daughter to weep for me, in my beloved England, nor son to talk of the virtues of his father, or to represent my name and perpetuate my family.

"The famous battle of Ramillies, by carrying off many of my comrades to the soldier's grave, promoted me to the head of a regiment, and I returned to England, to see and embrace my Henrietta. How strangely do time and circumstances alter us! With the warmth of a lover-husband, and the freedom of a soldier, I rushed to meet her. Her reception of me bespoke the usual delicacy of mind rendered almost austere by the late solitude of her life, and an affection, deep and warm at heart, yet chastened into pensive reserve,

in the expression of it, by her habitual restraint over herself and her solicitude regarding me during my protracted absence. To me, however, it appeared, at the moment, changed as I had myself been by the free manners of the camp, cold in sentiment, and quite altered from her former artless affection. This self-tormenting fancy had no sooner taken possession of my mind, than it seemed to receive proof from several minor circumstances afterwards, which I cannot now particularize, but, from that moment, began to be formed the morbid nucleus of all my subsequent misery.

"Again, as we lived longer together, I fancied that her temper had suffered somewhat from the self-restraint and solitude in which she had lived of late, and that she was now altogether somewhat of an altered character. I was right as to the fact—I was wrong as to the inference.

"What a selfish wretch man is!—and how that unamiable quality blinds him in reference both to his own character and the actions of others. Is it not this unfair dealing with facts—this wilful blindness—this incapacity of reasoning justly, when our feelings are excited, which is the cause of all our social miseries—and, in particular, of the proverbial jarrings of the connubial state? Even at this distance of time, and with that hallowed likeness of her I lament constantly before me, I do not say that my Henrietta was altogether right, but I know that *I* was much more in the wrong. For *I* had begun the wrong; and evil, saith the holy book, is like the letting out of water, which, from small beginnings, maketh wider and wider the way that it hath opened for itself; until, collecting every thing into its current, it becomes, at length, a torrent that is fearful and overwhelming. I had left her—that was the first cause of the alteration of habit and of thinking, that I began to observe; for the absence of her natural protector, together with the melancholy tendencies of her own thoughts, and some natural change in myself, induced by the habits of a soldier, made me think her, at least, not what she really was, even in the first year of our marriage. All these causes, however, which tended to make us, who were once so much one, two different beings, were nothing to the prevailing reflection which so much preyed upon my mind, that we had no children.

"Matthew," continued the general, with an impressive expression of face, "I am ashamed to discover, even to my nearest friend, my weakness in this matter. But I am wrong in calling it weakness. It was positive strength—strength of feeling, and reason, and reflection—all meeting together

in this point, and tightening this string, which, when touched upon hastily, even in common conversation, or harshly jarred against with any thing like wilfulness, excited me to absolute frenzy."

"How sadly you have yourself been afflicting," said the squire, as the general paused, "even though it did not extend to another and a most amiable being!"

"True, it was so, Matthew," the baronet replied, much affected by his recollections, "it is because I now *know them* to be *unjustifiable*, that I recall these feelings with such deep regret, in connexion with the memory of my ever-valued wife. But whatever *you* may have experienced, I know, that men of my nature, at least, are creatures of feeling, upon whom *reason* has but little actual effect; and when I tell you the remainder of my story, you will perceive that I was hurried forward into what I did and felt, by that inevitable cause of our thoughts and actions, and that unerring instrument of fate—my own nature."

When the time drew near that I was to return to join the army, Henrietta pleaded with me not to leave her again, with an earnestness that I am now astonished that I could resist. But my honour was engaged, and to military ambition, and the career of glory which success had opened to me, I had so pledged myself, that I could not give way to her touching reasonings. Besides, to confess the truth, it was only among the excitements of campaigns and of battle, that I could fully forget that intolerable consideration, which had still been the curse that poisoned the happiness of my wedded life, and rendered my home upon the whole irksome, if not melancholy. 'George,' said Henrietta to me, when we were about to part, 'if you will stay at home with me, we shall yet be happy—I know we shall!' and her half-melancholy smile as she said this, was so touching that it even then went to my heart.

"But it has still been my fate that some intense feeling pervading at the moment, has rendered me blind to my own happiness. I understood not the meaning of the important words. No more did I understand the look of chilled disappointment which her countenance assumed, on perceiving that this appeal to me had been made in vain. We parted affectionately, but our manner mutually was painfully ominous. It was more so in reality than I perceived at the time.

"On returning to the army, and to the strong contrasts of idleness and activity which occur in the manœuvres of a campaign, my thoughts were turned more than ever to my

home in England and my Henrietta. I now found I loved her more than ever, and brooded over every word and look of hers when last at home, especially her manner to some of our acquaintances, with a painful and inquisitive intensity. Even that love, which burned brighter towards her now as she was absent, induced me to look into several recollections with a narrowness that made me see several things in a new light, and gave me a key, as I thought, to her whole conduct, and in particular to that changed manner towards myself, which had so much affected me while living with her. These tormenting cogitations were involuntarily associated with the idea of a gentleman, whom I heard her praise in terms warmer than were quite agreeable to me at that time, and with whom she seemed to be more intimate than I thought consistent with the staid reserve of her character. I remembered their speaking together of the children of a mutual friend with a degree of admiration and delight which, upon a subject so tender, I felt to be exceedingly painful. At the critical moment, when my mind was heated with these broodings, some words were dropped by a brother officer who had accompanied me to England, which filled me with astonishment, and seemed to let in a light to my mind, merely to show me my own misery. I now took pains to assure myself upon several matters, and strangely did my suspicions seem to be verified—as they will ever be to a man who begins similar inquiries under the blindness of jealousy. Yet it was not easy altogether to shake my confidence in the faithfulness of Henrietta; and there were other circumstances which seemed to give every contradiction to my surmises. But a report that reached me at this period, through the levity of a gentleman who now joined the army, drove me almost to frenzy.

“Why need I dwell upon the hackneyed particulars of the doubtings and confirmations of this complex passion. A letter from herself which I received about this time, helped, by the construction I put upon several of her expressions, to confirm my delusion. But when several months had passed away subsequently, without hearing from her, and it was from *another quarter* I first learned that she was in that state which, under other circumstances, would have made me a proud and a happy man, I first thought my heart would have burst with my own reflections. Unable to get back to England at the time, to sift out the truth of all that I had surmised, I had recourse to a friend—a villain—whose indirect and artificial reply, completed my misery. In the height of the delirium of my mental distress, I wrote to

Henrietta in terms at which I now shudder even to think of, requesting a special messenger to be sent with such communication from her, as should clear her of all that I pointed out as suspicious; in failure of which, I remorselessly spoke of disowning the paternity of the infant to which she was about to give birth. To this cruel message, the only answer I received, months afterwards, was the news of my Henrietta's death, after giving birth to a son. That son I never saw—Matthew, blame me not for this emotion," he added after a pause; "has not my cruel and mistaken conduct been the breaking of her heart?"

"But what became of the child, Sir George?" said the squire, as the general paused.

"He died within a month after his unfortunate mother. Yes, the grave swallowed up my hopes and the happiness of my youth—as it will soon hide my sorrows, and then my name and family will perish in extinction."

"I think, sir, you said you never saw the infant," added the squire, willing to divert the general's mind for a moment. "Are you quite certain of his death?"

"I have sometimes thought there was a mystery over that event—at least in reference to those to whose charge the infant was left," continued Sir George. "To be more particular, on my return from Flanders, I was so overpowered by my feelings, that on reaching London I was prevented travelling farther by illness, the consequence of the shock I had received; and on my recovery at a distant period afterwards, I found on my table a letter, stating that the infant had died in an obscure parish of Scotland, near the house to which my Henrietta had retired. So deeply was I affected by this intelligence, and the few particulars added regarding Henrietta's death, that it never occurred to me to suspect its truth, nor even if it had, could I hope for much success in my inquiries regarding one, whom her relatives considered I had so deeply injured. The principal of them then alive, indeed, namely, her uncle, would not see me nor hold with me any communication. The thing that roused my suspicion in some degree, upon making inquiries regarding my son's death, was, that the woman to whom he had been intrusted as nurse, as well as her husband, had shortly after his interment left the country; and even Henrietta's relatives, as I have since learned, were far from satisfied upon the subject. But my ill-health, together with the melancholy which grew upon me from my own reflections, has still incapacitated me from making any effectual inquiries upon the subject, believing as I have still done, the worst;

until your accidental mention of having somewhere met with a youth who bore a strong resemblance to that portrait, induced me to revert with some slight gleam of hope to these circumstances of my history.

"To finish my tale," he went on, after another pause; "convinced, at length, by finding out the envious villany of one individual, that I had been deeply deceived to the wronging of that angel whose mere image I can never cease contemplating, and now, at this late period, a hope, however faint, being infused into my mind, I shall never rest until I obtain the most complete proof regarding the death of that infant, of which I so fatally disowned the paternity. And oh! could I but entertain the most distant fancy that he was yet in the land of the living—that that blessing of Heaven, which has ever been the brightest wish of my heart, had been granted to me—namely, a son of my own and Henrietta's, still in existence to bless my declining years, and preserve my name and lineage to future generations, my gray hairs should seek the grave with happiness and peace."

"You *must* have a son, sir! and he *shall* be found!" exclaimed the blunt squire, starting enthusiastically to his feet; "and who knows but that that handsome boy, who opened the gate for me in the Highlands of Scotland, may be the very youth, after all?"

A gleam of joy lighted up the wan features of the general, as the other spoke. A journey together on this pursuit was planned on the spot, and various minor arrangements were formed and decided upon, ere ever the two retired to their apartments,

CHAPTER XXII.

They of these marches, gracious sovereign, shall be a wall sufficient to defend our inland from the pilfering borderers.

HARAR V.

Our story now takes a leap over about two years of time, that is to say, until the early part of the year 1743, in order to follow, for a space, the fortunes of Hector's old friends of Corrie-vrin and Glendochart, now gentlemen soldiers in the Black Watch. The sequel of our tale also demands that we should here give a few particulars of the first history of that celebrated regiment.

From a very early part of the last century, several companies of picked men were raised and stationed in different districts, chiefly for the performance of duties which the distresses of outlawed individuals, after the several rebellions, rendered necessary, but which it was found impossible to have done with efficiency, by any troops less acquainted with the habits of the people, and the romantic localities of their wild country. Originally six in number, these were called independent companies, from being commanded by noblemen or gentlemen, considered favourably affected to the new government, then by no means well established in the north, who acted entirely independently of each other. Of these original companies, the command of the one stationed in Inverness-shire was intrusted to the celebrated Lord Lovat, who, in common with other chieftains, was extremely proud of his "Watch."

About 1740, it was determined to make a large addition to their numbers, to embody the whole into a regiment of the line, and to train them more carefully, not only in their own peculiar exercise, but in the modes of marching and manœuvring then practised by the English infantry. It was on this occasion that the whole were assembled between Taybridge, at the mouth of Loch Tay, and the old town of Aberfeldy; the chief scene of their mustering and exercising, being, as

we have seen, in the noble valley of Glenlyon. They derived their original appellation of the *Reicadan Du*, or Black Watch, from the dark colour of the tartan which they wore, and which, being much composed of black, blue, and green, however well it served to conceal their persons when threading the thickets of their own forests, gave them, when embodied, an imposingly dark and almost solemn appearance. This was peculiarly striking, when contrasted with the showy look of the English infantry of the time, who might well be called by the Highlanders, the *seidar dearag*, or red soldiers, when not only their coats, but, also, their waistcoats and breeches, shone in all the conspicuousness of glaring scarlet.

To the respectability of the men of which the Black Watch was then composed, we have had occasion more than once to allude. This respectability will be still more manifest, when a reference is had, not only to the temptations which the privilege of wearing arms held out to the younger branches of wealthy families, but to the condition and sentiments of a brave and enthusiastic people, among whom, wealth itself was never considered a source of respectability, in the same exclusive sense as it is in the south; nor was poverty, *per se*, ever of course visited with that contempt, which, in a more corrupt condition of society, it invariably is. It is this, together with the fewness of their wants, and the consequent fewness of their cares,—their opportunities for indolence, manly exercise and song, that makes the great happiness of the Highlander; and, by attaching him to his barren hills and wild valleys above all spots on the earth, affords a proof to the world, that the terms poverty and riches are often sadly misapplied, both in their relation to the wants and happiness of man.

The duties of the Highland Watch, when spread over the mountain districts of their country, were of a nature which required, in general, all the delicacy and forbearance of spirit which should characterize persons of a superior condition; and were, upon the whole, of a species which never could have been intrusted to such men as usually fill the ranks of our modern infantry,—far less to the common soldiers of that immoral period. The various attainders and confiscations which the attachment of the Gael to their ancient kings had occasioned in the Highlands, having thrown a number of families into misery and destitution, together with the difference in politics, which are the natural consequences of mercenary temptation, so much the system of government from Walpole's times to the present, having

aggravated the quarrels, and increased the reprisals of rival clans,—all these causes were productive of the disorders which it was the duty of the Black Watch to detect and repress. These disorders, however, and that spirit of revenge, which, to an exaggerated extent, has been attributed to the Highlander, with occasional cattle-driving and stealthy opposition to the law, were, notwithstanding all that has been represented regarding them, in reality much inferior, both in amount and aggravation, to the robberies, rapines, and assassinations, then committed in England, to an extent, and with an effrontery, that is astonishing in times so near to our own. Nevertheless, among a people simple in their manners, and moral in their lives and sentiments, to a remarkable degree, such disorders being often mixed up with politics and party spirit, made a strong appearance in the calm life of the hills; and, at least, afforded a handle for that irritating severity, with which, during this and the preceding reign, every thing like offence committed in Scotland was uniformly treated by a government, contemptible in history for its own shameless corruption. But when it is considered that the duties of the Watch embraced also the watchings of all meetings of the chiefs, and the checking of every thing like political combination, as well as the enforcing throughout their glens the severe provisions of the hated disarming act, and the hounding out of robbers and Cearnachs, and that the offenders were very often the near relations or connexions of the men employed against them, the painful delicacy of their duty may easily be understood; yet that duty they appear to have performed without reproach.

It was in the month of April, 1743, when an unexpected march from the hills assembled the whole regiment of the Black Watch in the ancient city of Perth; and with whom should the two M'Phersons find a lodging, but with Hector's old Highland patroness, widow M'Lain. It was just sun-down, as, after coming off a long march, the Breadalbane brothers, as they now were called in the regiment, from their distinguished appearance, modestly knocked at the poor woman's door.

"Is this widow M'Lain's dwelling?" said Malcolm, as the woman stood looking up to them in the door-way, "and may you be her?"

"It's just her, and a widow, as ye say," said the old woman, opening the door, "forlorn and lonely this mony a year, and M'Lain indeed was the name o' my leal gude man, whose head is laid in the grave lang sinayne."

"May we come in, Mistress?"

"Come ben and welcome, my braw lads! Alake! my heart warms to look at your blue bonnets and belted plaids, that ye set sae weel; for, bating the red jerkin and the black girdle wi' the buckle, ye just remind me of my ain gude man that's dead and gone; but that was in his ain youthfu' days—wae me!"

"May we get a lodging in your house, widow, if ye please?"

"Bythely, sir; for my poor hallan is clean empty these five weeks and mair. The price I'll seek frae ye will be sevenpence a week, a piece, if ye sleep thegither. Ye'll may be think it dear, but I'm a poor woman, and it's a' my living; for my sight is greatly gone, and I can make little hand at the spinning, and I'm dool and dowie, since my gude man died, and far waur since I buried my bairn," added the woman, interrupted by tears; "but what need I greet before you like a silly body as I am? yet ye see, sirs, the sight o' you just made me think o' my bounny gude man, as I hae mind o' him in his youth like you. And the tears o' the lone woman easily come out o' a full heart. However," she added, wiping her eyes, "that's the price o' your lodgings, as I said; but ye'll get a clean bed, and a canny fire-side, and I'll tend you wi' a' my power to make you cosie and comfortable."

"We'll not grudge you what you ask, good woman, and we'll ne'er interrupt your sorrow for your dead good man."

"Noo, God bless you for that word, for it's just the generosity and the sympathy that belongs to the hills, where me and Allan M'Lain spent our youth. But the Black Watch are naught but gentlemen, and the pay o' King George can weel afford a decent expense, for sixpence a day is a deal o' money, and you twa will hae mair than that same, for I see an honourable strip o' white lace on your arms, which shows that you are gentlemen in office."

"It's a great thing to be even one step above the ranks in the Black Watch, widow, no doubt," said the younger of the M'Phersons, with due pride; "and as for the sixpence a day, it is a sum of money to be sure, and gathers weel for us on the hills, where the bit and the drap are not sold and bought as they are in the Lowlands, and where a gentleman can be generous and a gudewife can be kind, without counting the green blades in the kail-pot, or asking the price of the sip of brose, or the bite of bannock. But when we come to the paved city, then it is that the hand is never

out of the sporan, for this thing and that thing, and seven pence-halfpenny a day is not such a fortune as you would imagine."

The woman could conceive that the speaker might possibly be right, and wiping with her apron the bottom of a plaintree chair for each, the muskets dented on the hearth-stone, and the young men sat down in comfort by the widow's fire.

"Now ye'll hae a' the news o' the hills, gentlemen," said the widow, setting herself down humbly on a low three-legged stool beside, or rather beneath, the tall youths, "and may be ye can tell me of a bonny young gentle boy, named Hector Monro; he'll be a fell fallow, noo, I dare say; for time, that twitters silently through the sand-glass, gallops fast to whiten auld heads, and turn bairns into stalwart men."

"I know him very well, and it was his grateful talk that recommended us to seek your house," said Malcolm, his eye glistening with pleasure at the recollection.

"Noo, God bless the laddie, and tell me every word about him," said the woman, clasping her hands; "I think I have yet a tie to the world when Hector Monro lives, and remembers still the puir widow woman."

"I knew Hector Monro," said Malcolm, "when he was living at Glenmore, and was thought the best swordsman on Breadalbane hills; but it's two years and over since I have seen him, and now they say he's gone to the south, and is naught but a gentleman of high degree, and wears a laced coat of English broad-cloth, and a wig on his head like my lord Breadalbane, and a silk bag behind his neck like a Lowland squire, and wha but maister Hector Monro, with his sword by his side for the fashion, and his cane in his hand, like a gay gallant of Holyrood in the Lowlands."

"Then that's my prophecy come good!" exclaimed the woman, clapping her palms; "for I aye said that Hector Monro would come to be a gentleman, and I know—I know—that when time's expediency shall lead him to the north again, he'll ne'er forget to seek out the dwelling of the puir widow, who was a friend to him in his low estate, and knew the orphan when the world knew him not. But that I leave to Providence; and now tell me, young men, what can bring the Black Watch, all in a body, to quarter here in the town of Perth?"

"That is more than we know ourselves, widow," said

Malcolm ; "there's some say one thing, and some say another ; but hark, is not that some one knuckling at the door ?"

The tap was repeated, and on the door being opened, in walked Farquhar M'Naughton.

"I have traced you rightly," said the young man, coming forward, "and I have news to tell you. We march for England in a few days."

"For England?" repeated all the others—"for England, do ye say?"

"For London city, and that you will find by to-morrow's parade. The orders have come down to my lord Sempill, and the officers are all talking of the affair at the town-cross."

"This is very extraordinary," said Malcolm, thoughtfully. "Were we not enlisted with the express understanding, that the forty-second were never to be moved out of Scotland, of whose hills alone we were raised to be the watch and ward for peace and loyalty?"

"That is true, and it seems that it is nothing but the loyalty that takes us away, for we are only going on a short visit, as the officers say, to see the king, and then to come straight back to the north again. In short, we are to be marched to London merely to be reviewed by the king's majesty himself, that he may see us with his own eyes; and we shall receive many honours, no doubt, to testify what his gracious majesty knows full well, that the Black Watch consists of a quality of men who are to be very differently considered from the common red coats who serve for pay and perquisites in the south."

"Then, if that be the case, it is only a visit of honour, as you say, and no breach of bargain with us," said Samuel, the younger of the brothers; "but as you have heard the news so soon, did you not talk to any of the town's Lowlanders about the matter; they know more of southern doings and parliament policy than we do in the Highlands."

"I just called in at the shop of the old acquaintance of our friend Monro, Maister Hugh M'Vey, that is now a good baillie of Perth; and when I told him the news, he just shook his head, and said nothing."

"Well, and what do you draw from that?"

"Why, that he's not perfectly pleased wi' our jaunt; and then, as he walked about his shop—as a baillie should walk, no doubt—he began to say something, half to himself, about

southern jouckery-pauchery, and whig suspicion of Highland loyalty; and how that it was sma' respect that colonels, and earls, and king's ministers, would pay to their bargains wi' poor soldiers, who, if they attempted to take their own parts and seek their own rights, should they find themselves deceived, it would be naething but mutiny and disobedience, and then there would be opening of books and reading orders of war, and courts-martial, may be, and trying and shooting, for an example; and so he muttered about the war in Flanders, and the balance of power, and that the king wanted men, and the duke of Cumberland cared little how he treated Highland Scotchmen; and when I spoke again about a pleasant march to London city, to figure in a review before the king's majesty, the baillie only shook his head again, and said nothing."

"There was much wisdom in that, no doubt," said Malcolm, saying nothing more; and in imitation of this species of sagacity, the three soldiers sat for a time, meditating on this news in true judicious silence.

"If ye would allow me to put in my word, gentlemen lads," said the widow, "I'll tell you what I think. It little matters what ye consider about the matter, or what baillie M'Vey, or any other responsible man, may say. Ye have put on King George's coat, and taen king George's shilling, and it's the way o' this world, that the puir must even beck to the bidding o' the powerful, be it just or be it no; and if the thing is not fair and right, they'll make it so, by big words and wigged heads; and the puir man will aye come aff at the loss. So it is weel for you to do as you are bid, wi' a good grace, for bargain here, or justice there, ye'll find that the king is a different man from the cadger."

"That may be very true to an old woman, widow," said the elder M'Pherson; "but the king of England is a gentleman, and now sitting by compact in the chair of our ancient kings, and will hardly venture, I think, to put a deception on the finest men of the north, and attempt to remove them by craft and cunning from their own hills. If he do, as I think he will not, he and his earls, and great men, little know the spirit of the Black Watch."

"What need we argue here," said Farquhar M'Naughton, gaily, "when we have the word of the king and his lords to give us confidence? For my part, I think it is a high honour for the whole Watch to be sent for to play the broadsword before the king's majesty, and the princes and grandees, on some broad field, at London, as Gregor M'Gre-

gor and John Campbell did,* in the old palace of Saint James's. And who knows what may come o't, for the like of you and I, gentlemen," added the youth, with conscious complacency at the idea of his own and their personal appearance; "for the like has been, as the proverb says, that the king himself may come in the cadger's road. Odd, if I could just get speech of his Hanover majesty, wouldn't I down on my knee, and seek a pardon for my poor old father, that's hiding, like a modiwart, in the wild hollow of Glendochart?"

With such speeches as this, the men of the Black Watch discussed, in their various quarters, the unexpected orders for their march to England; which, though it at first excited surprise, mingled with anger, was generally acquiesced in, with those warm feelings of loyalty which belonged to their character, in reference to any such sentiment, as well as to the sanguine view of the honour intended them. Far different,

* Some time previous to this, his Majesty (George the Second) having heard much of his Highlanders of the north, and their peculiarities of war and costume, expressed, in conversation, a strong desire to see one. This having been intimated to the Lord Crawford, then colonel of the Black Watch, he caused two of the privates to be sent for, who were presented to his Majesty by Sir Robert Monro, the lieutenant-colonel. These two men are named above. M'Gregor was surnamed the Beautiful, on account of his personal appearance; and scarcely less handsome was Campbell, who was of an ancient family, settled at Duncaves, in Perthshire. They performed the broadsword exercise, and that of the Lochaber axe, or lance, in the great gallery at St. James's, before his Majesty, the Duke of Cumberland, Marshal Wade, and a number of general officers, assembled to witness the display; and showed, says Colonel Stewart, "so much dexterity and skill in the management of their weapons, as to afford perfect satisfaction to his Majesty." The story is well known, that, being ordered a gratuity of a guinea each, they took the money, considering the act as less an insult than a mistake, arising from the king's ignorance of their condition in their own country; but each gave his guinea to the porter, at the door of the palace, as he went out. This may serve to illustrate what we have stated of the conditions and feelings of the privates of the Black Watch. Mr. M'Gregor having ultimately purchased the lands of Inverardine, in Breadalbane, was grandfather of Sir Gregor M'Gregor, a commander in South America. Mr. Campbell was afterwards killed, fighting with his regiment at Ticonderoga, having then attained the rank of captain-lieutenant.

however, were the sentiments, upon the subject, of many wise and far-seen Scotsmen, who looked upon the order with a surprise and a suspicion, that, when various late occurrences were referred to between England and Scotland,—which, however exasperating to the people of the latter nation, of the time, have scarcely been thought worthy of notice in history,—amounted, on this occasion, to perfect indignation. “You will see what will come o’ it,” was the general cry of those who had not yet forgotten old tales of “Scotland’s scaith.”—“It’s no for naught that they want to wyse awa’ the finest men of the hills, and carry them into the southard country. It’ll be weel if we ever see the Black Watch again!” And the cry, as to their present destination, and undisguised apprehensions as to their ultimate fate, soon reached the glens where their friends and families dwelt, and penetrated into the fastnesses of Lochaber and Breadalbane.

Nevertheless, these apprehensions of the civilian people* were not believed by the loyal young men of the Watch; and, in good spirits, and greatly beloved while they lived in Perth, the time speedily passed over until about the middle of April, when they were considered ready for their journey. As they occasionally looked north, however, towards those hills which they were so soon about to leave, a qualm of apprehension, as to the future, would sometimes shoot across the minds of the Breadalbane brothers, as well as M’Naughton, when their thoughts naturally rested on those who lived in the glens between them.

“I do not know how it is,” said Farquhar, as he walked musingly, with the other two, on the night before the morn-

* That this measure was disapproved of, and looked upon even with alarm by the most sagacious and best informed public men of the time, who knew intimately the state of the Highlands, and the character of the high-spirited men of the forty-second, appears from the remonstrances of the celebrated Lord President Forbes, preserved in the Culloden papers, and addressed to General Clayton, then commander-in-chief in Scotland, and the successor of Marshal Wade. His lordship having some private information, which induced him to disbelieve the first report, of their being merely sent for to be seen by the king—expresses, in the strongest terms, his anxiety as to their fate and destination; and his concern at the understood intention of taking them from their own hills, where he shows them to be so efficient,—and meaning them for foreign service, for which they had never been enlisted.

ing intended for their departure,—“I know not how it is, but I should like just to have one look of some friends we have among the hills, before we go to the south. It seems strange, and uncanny, that the parting piobrachd of the morrow's morning should play us off, wi' our backs turned to our Highland lasses, without a word o' the mouth, or a shake o' the hand, or a tear o' the e'e, may be, of them we like.”

“I cannot say but I would wish to hear what some auld folk would say, and to see how some young folk would look just at the parting time,” said the younger M'Pherson. “I never left Scotland before, and wouldn't it be odd if we should by chance ne'er see it again?”

“These are the fancies of raw boys, and not of grown men,” said Malcolm rather sternly; but as he was speaking, a bare-legged youth plucked him by the sleeve. “What,” said he, “do you want, boy?”

“There's an auld wife wants to see you, maister,” said the boy, “if you be Malcolm M'Pherson and Farquhar M'Naughton, forbye.”

“Where is she that wants us?”

“Oo, just here by the water-lip; and there's mair than ane. Come and see.”

The three youths followed the boy, and turning down, were accosted by a tall “harridan” of a woman, dressed in the mode of a Highland calliagh, with a dark tartan plaid more carefully drawn round her face, than seemed necessary in a fine spring evening.

“It's a pleasant night for your walk, gentlemen,” said a low manly voice; “hoot, what needs I make a masquerade o' mysel—ye'll soon ken me;” and out shot a large hand to grasp theirs; and the plaid being thrown back, showed a well-known face. “Do you no ken your own father, Farquhar? and you, Samuel M'Pherson, your father-in-law, as I may say, from the auld bield o' Glendochart. I didna think that a petticoat and a tonag—an auld wife's mutch, and a woollen cartouch—would hae kept my ain son from knowing me here in Perth,” said the disguised Cearnach. “Faith, I think Jock Chockthrapple, the hangman, my auld acquaintance o' the jail, will hae little chance o' finding me out in such a wylicoot as this,”—and the athletic old man flounced along in his woman's dress, with a very ludicrous and uncouth effect. “There's mair o' us here, lads,” he continued, “and we're a' woman together, to be sure, but I am the auldest wife mysel, and the least likely to be a temptation to young men—so come along.”

The Cearnach led the way into a large old-fashioned inn

that stood by the Tay-side, over the door of which creaked an enormous swinging sign-board, with the Farquharson's arms painted upon it, in a style and manner such as might have been expected from a Highland artist, who understood the dignity of his subject much better than the manner of blazoning it forth. The disguised reiver, giving a knowing nod to the landlord, who watched at the door, the whole were ushered into a comfortably furnished apartment, where sat three females whom our youths were at no loss to recognise."

"See ye that now, lads?" said the Cearnach, as the brothers, with surprise and joy, embraced the stately matron of Corrie-vrin, who hastened to the arms of her tall and manly sons. Next, their staid and black-eyed sister, with modesty, but with a blush of warmth and pleasure, received the eager salute of their comrade, Farquhar, while Margaret, the Cearnach's daughter, who had come all the way from Glen-dochart, almost flew into the embrace of the younger M'Pherson.

"My faith!" exclaimed the old man, "the sight of such a meeting as this is well worthy of the longest tramp, and the weariest night that we have yet lain down in our beds, since we left the inner wilderness of Breadalbane."

After the first rapid congratulations and inquiries had been exchanged, the young soldiers could not help complimenting their mother, as well as the younger females, on their looks and general appearance, notwithstanding the length of their journey.

"Mother, we are happy to attend to you," said both brothers.

"It's not to hide, nor it's not to stifle," said Mrs. M'Pherson, "the concern that this sudden news had brought to my heart, as I sat lonely with my daughter here, in the deserted glen of Corrie-vrin—it was not for going to the south at king George's bidding, nor for being shipped o'er the sea, may be, or to fight German battles, with which Scotland has naught to do, that I ever gave my consent that ye should take an oath to the majesty of Hanover, as common men in the Black Watch. I see what you are going to reply, but your father put faith in the southland lords, and sair did he rue it; and if it should not please the king to let you back to your own homes, but, regardless of the engagements of Highland agents, send you to be sacrificed on foreign fields, what would become of the bereaved widow, who has no other hope on earth but yourselves? and in what would the tears of the maidens end, whose hearts are set on their brothers and

sweethearts of the Black Watch? Hear, therefore, lads, your mother's words; it would hae been happy for me, if you had humbled yourselves to dig the sward that brings you milk and meal in Breadalbane, and never handled penny or plack of the king's money, who now shows you and I that he has full power over you—life and limb, lands and liberty, as time will, I fear, sadly bring about."

"Mother, I think your fears are vain, and you take this expedition too serious: but suppose it were otherwise, what would you have us to do?"

"Seek your discharge from the Watch before you put yourselves farther into the power of strangers. Believe me, this march to England bodes no good, and before you shall run the risk of being torn from Scotland's hills, and carried to where your lives will be in jeopardy, I will sell every rood of land that your father left me, to buy you off from this foreigner bondage of them who care little for justice where poor men are the claimants, and far less for the mother's feelings or the widow's tears."

"And you sanction such fears and suspicions anent this simple march to London and back, Mr. M'Naughton?" said Malcolm, astonished at the solemnity of his mother's appeal.

"If it prove a simple march to London and home again, I'll acknowledge that Mrs. M'Pherson and I are but sma' profitters by that best o' the world's lessons, experience," said the Caernach, impressively. "It's o'er lang for me to tell you my reasons now, but I hae little skill of men's motives and Whig policy, if the king of England, that had Scotland given him to rule o'er, just into the bargain, would whistle up the Black Watch to London town, where it was never their agreement to go, for naught else but the pleasure of a fuglement afore the ladies on a review day."

The three young men sat for a few minutes as if struck with a conviction that was fatal to their hopes, while the maidens gazed in every successive countenance with the strongest anxiety.

"It cannot be, that the English government mean this, father," said Farquhar. "Although the Whigs may be suspicious of the men of the hills, they are not surely deceptive, and openly unjust. Besides, our officers are too independent and high-minded to allow us to be cheated in this manner, and shipped off, like unwilling cattle, to a foreign shore."

"The cock crows loudly, and flaps his wings bravely, on his own middenstead, though it be but poor," said the old

man; "but the king's minister has many gifts to give, and Highland lairds has many wants, especially when the gold and gear of England begins to shine in their een—and what are puit men's rights to rich men's reasons, when they hae the power? Farquhar, I would give all the horned beasts, and every ewe and weather that bleats on the braes aboon Glendochart, to get you off the chance that I see this day of your mother never seeing your face again, and bonny Phœmia M'Pherson there being left a weary wanter, when she should be a braw married woman—or a sorrowfu' widow, mayhap, before she's ever a proclaimed bride."

Farquhar sat ruminating upon his father's words, his eyes unconsciously fixed on Phœmia M'Pherson, while Malcolm rose, and strode hastily across the room.

"It is too late, mother and friends," said the latter, stopping short; "your proposal is too late, even supposing it were feasible or necessary; for the Black Watch marches to-morrow morning; and were there even time, it is small boast for me to say, that it would not be easy for pound or penny to buy off such as us, in times like the present."

"Is that certainly the case?" said Mrs. M'Pherson, hastily, addressing the old man.

"I fear it is so, as I have already told you," answered the Cearnach. "To-morrow, by day-break, the lads must go; and we, as well as they, must trust to Providence as to what may be to come. But mark my words, gentlemen, each, as you are now about to leave us for long or for short; if, when you get to London city, you find the English, as I fear they will, mean to break the paction that binds you to the hills, by forcing you off to foreign parts; if you submit quietly to be transported where your friends and sweethearts may never see you more, I own you unworthy to wield your father's swords, or to inherit the quiet lands that they leave you in auld Scotland."

"We will not! we cannot! nor shall we surely experience such injustice!" said they all.

"But tell us, sir," said the younger M'Pherson, "what, in such a case, you would have us to do?"

"What did I do, when, for real misdeeds, which they would have punished with undue severity, they had me shut up in the Tolbooth of Perth? Does not the breach of one law make a road for the breach of another? and the power which oppresses and deceives may no longer be power when the leg is loose and the arm is free. Should they even mean as I suspect, they will not chain Highland-gentlemen together like Lowland hounds, and force them into the boat that

takes them from their country, at the bayonet's point. Then, is not the foot free and the heart brave? And will not the north star guide you to your own glens, even if your tramp should be under the cloud of night?"

"Duncan," said the elder M'Pherson, "consider what you advise us to. We are sworn soldiers under his majesty, king George, and would not that be open desertion, added to disobedience of orders, and the penalty is——"

"There are, at this moment, in the castle of Glenmore," interrupted the old man, with all the original fierceness of the Cearnach character, "those I need not name, that spoke to me in serious anxiety before I left Breadalbane, who would think little of *his* courage, or his spirit either, that would talk of penalties in respect of orders founded only in injustice and deception, should such orders ever be offered to the brave men of the Black Watch; and there are even here those that would draw a blade——"

"Let me not be mistaken, Duncan M'Naughton," interrupted, in return, the former, with an eye that kindled with his feelings, "as if *fear* had aught to do with my reasons or resolves. There are reasons and duties growing out of the compact of society, which make no man's private feelings the measure or rule of his conduct, in circumstances such as ours. But Samuel, my brother, and you, Farquhar, my friend, will you join me now in the firm resolve, that if the apprehensions and suspicions of our parents turn out to be true, we will brave every thing, and even that death itself, which the powerful, aided by the law, can soon inflict, to return to our happy hills, and our warm-hearted sweethearts, in bonny Breadalbane!"

The other two youths, anxious, by this time, to be heard, started to their feet, and with brief expressions, yet speaking looks, jointly and severally confirmed the resolve.

Surely women are not naturally abettors of disloyalty and military disobedience, yet when the two maidens, who had watched this whole conversation with the utmost anxiety, witnessed the solemnity of this resolve, their eyes began to stream with tears of sympathetic enthusiasm, and mingling in the excitement, the young men next joined hands with theirs, as if the whole actually anticipated that the accomplishment of the resolution was to turn out to be the means of the happiest meeting that they were ever again to experience.

"And och!" said the dame, herself, rising also, and clasping her hands with joy, "if ye come back to me, safe and sound, how I should welcome you again to the green pas-

tures of Corrie-vrin, where your father's sword would be ill fitting your wear, if you could not defend yourselves and your wives that are yet to be, from red-coats and braggarts that may ever come against you, until, may be—who knows!—king Jamie himself might come from France to call up the clans, and take the part of the oppressed, and to make poor auld Scotland a real kingdom again."

"Then farewell, mother! and farewell, Peggy!" said Samuel M'Pherson, giving his hand to those who so much interested him. "I hear the evening drum sounding down the street, and we must to our quarters. But there's a new day to come, and you be up by the bonny gray of the morning, we shall yet have another parting embrace; and then, ho! for an honourable visit, and no deception, to the king's majesty himself, in the great city of London."

CHAPTER XXIII.

They all were drest in armour sheen,
 Upon the pleasant banks of Tay;
 Before a king they might be seen.

OLD BALLAD.

NEVER did a pleasanter morning shine forth from the welkin in the cloudy climate of Scotland than that which gladdened the romantic heights and hollows in the diversified neighbourhood of Perth, on the day when the Black Watch were to march for England. At the first roll of the morning drum, which in the midst of his dreams, he heard echoing from the neighbouring houses, Farquhar M'Naughton started from his bed, and but a few minutes were suffered to elapse before his feet bounded on the dewy sod in the outskirts of the town. The fresh breeze from the hills blew fragrant in his face, as he hurried to the Geds field, towards which the men were now on all sides hastily proceeding.

A strong interest being by this time taken by the people of the neighbourhood in all that related to the Black Watch, already the inhabitants round, of every class, began also to muster, to see the regiment march; and before the ranks were completely made up on the green, a lively swarm of eager people appeared on every height around, or urging along every field and pathway, anxious to obtain a parting look of their favourite regiment. Honest burghers, in blue bonnets and ribbed gramashams, might be seen hastening, almost breathless, along the pathways, leading their eager sons, or their partial daughters, who, with snooded hair and jimp waists, peeped forth from under the usual chequered plaid with which they were modestly hooded, at the "braw lads" and gallant gentlemen, who were going to leave them for a long march, just as at home they were becoming exceedingly interesting.

Before the men had been long on the ground, crowds of lairds and landed men, whose brawny limbs bestrode, with more strength than grace, the shaggy shelties on which they had travelled from before daylight, came galloping down the hill-sides to be at the gathering; and even Highland ladies, with looks as lofty as their hills, their "high heads," as the toupees of the time were appropriately called, in many instances cased in cane calashes, according to the fashion of the time, were not wanting to add grace and dignity to the filling crowd; while such of them as came from a distance, rambled about the field upon their pillioned nags, as well to excite the envy of the more lowly dameels, as to commend their own graces to the favour of the soldierly band, whose attentions were now the objects of general emulation.

A pleasanter sight could seldom be seen, nor one more exciting, at least to all who at present occupied this animated field, to whom, in the true spirit of northern nationality and mountaineer enthusiasm, every circumstance of this present parting was a matter of infectious *feeling*. A Highlander is always affected upon leaving his hill, especially if it be to traverse lands that he never saw, and under circumstances of such uncertain promise, as may excite the stores of his warm imagination. No wonder, then, that this body of "Highland shentlemen" should not be able, on this occasion, to look with indifference on the friends and favourites from whom they were about to part, nor upon the romantic mountains of their favourite north, now appearing to reverberate back, in a hundred echoes, the exhilarating strains of the farewell piobrachd, which, by the enthusiasm of the numerous pipers on the field, often swelling into an expression quite epic and Ossianic, drew tears from many eyes, both of soldiers and spectators.

"You will see, mother, that this will be an honourable march and a speedy return, for all your fears," said both the M'Phersons to the thoughtful dame of Corrie-vrin, as they were permitted a moment's conversation at the edge of the field. "What indeed should hinder it? Do we not go in the light of day, with drum and bagpipe, like good men; and the very air wafting kind wishes after us; and think you we shall not return in greater honour to Scotland again? for right well does the king know that our presence cannot be dispensed with in our own glens."

"God grant it, my son!" said the anxious dame. "But still I cannot forget that it was fighting along with the noble Mar, against the father of this present king, that your

brave father lost his life in the bloody fifteen. It was sore against my will that he went out, and as ill do I like this your present setting forth, flattering though it appears. But be it as it will, the widow woman's word is not minded; for, alas! she is but the saugh tree at the water's edge, that seldom holds up its drooping head, but still maun bow to whatever comes, in fragile resignation."

"And it's unco hard to be resigned when there's nothing left behind—nothing—nothing in this lonesome world," murmured another poor widow, namely, Mrs. M'Lain, speaking from behind their backs, as she also had come to the parting.

With such speech as this, and not without tears, such as mothers shed over their sons, the brothers parted from the weeping dame, as well as did the younger from his warm-hearted betrothed, the Cearnach's daughter. With fewer tears, but with not less feeling, did Phoemy M'Pherson allow young M'Naughton to kiss her cheek in parting, for a strange foreboding mixed with all their hopes, that something was to happen to the Black Watch on this march. Nor was the Cearnach himself, fierce and gloomy as he looked, from under the dark-green plaid which shaded his face, much less affected at bidding his son farewell, yet were his suspicions less qualified as he gazed on the imposing line of the Watch before him; and the advice he gave his son was more firm and decided. "Farquhar, my lad," he said, "if the southrons, to whom you go, act honourably by you, out-do them in honour and a noble spirit; and if the king grants me a pardon, he shall not lose by it here on the hills; but if they attempt to deceive you with craft and guile, remember that you are the son of Duncan M'Naughton, as well as of Marion Shaw, in whose name you have enrolled yourself in the Black Watch."

At length, after the few minutes allowed, when every hand had been shaken for the last time, and every parting blessing said, the extended line was again strictly formed, the shouldered muskets gleamed in the morning sun, and the word to present arms having been given by Lord Sempill, in honour of the hospitable inhabitants of Perth, a roll of drums and a scream of warlike music from a crowd of bagpipes, gave stirring note to the surrounding multitude that their brave friends were about to depart.

Lord Sempill, the colonel, now rode along the line of the regiment, and not unaware of the Jacobite sentiments, little disguised among the crowd, and the dubious feelings still lurking among the men, he stopped in the centre, and ad-

dressed a few words to the officers in the hearing of the M'Phersons and most of the regiment. The import of his words was caught up with warmth, when, lifting his hat after his speech, the bonnets along the line were instantly raised, and a loud huzza of enthusiasm and of loyalty was simultaneously set up. This shout was answered by waving of handkerchiefs and clapping of hands from the surrounding people, until three hearty cheers enhanced the excitement of the moment, and echoed from the children of the town behind. Scarcely had the exhilarating sound subsided, when the word was given—the moved arms gleamed once more, the music struck up and sounded towards the hills, and in another instant the whole body was in motion. Great part of the crowd followed, as if unconsciously, for some distance. The strain of the bagpipes next changed for one less lively, as they began to mount the height which separated them from the town.

Here the crowd began to pause. Soon the music became faint in the distance, and backing their firelocks over their shoulders, the Highlanders, in grave and sentimental silence, prepared themselves for their long march.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A puissant and mighty power
Is marching hitherward in proud array.

SHAKESPEARE.

PROCEEDING by easy stages on their march, it was the evening of the third day after the departure from Perth, ere the Black Watch obtained its first view of the far-famed city of Edinburgh. Few, at least of the rank and file, having ever been so far south before, the romantic situation of the city, its lofty castle with its ancient towers and palaces, affected these simple denizens of the hills with various feelings besides those of mere wonder and admiration.

Though situated in the Lowlands, and the high seat of the "parchment law," yet, as the modern capital of their ancient kingdom, where their parliament had sat and their kings had held their court, and that with a degree of royal state which excited great admiration in so poor a country as Scotland, they justly felt a pride in its imposing appearance, as well as in its local associations. But the late unpopular barter, under the name of a union with its former enemy, having denuded it of all that once gave it splendour as well as authority—having flitted for ever from within its venerable walls, not only its king and its nobility, its parliament and privy-council, but also its prosperity and its wealth, and left it little else than a school of rapacious chicanery, and a dull nest of the eating moths of the law—they entered its ruinous ports, and marched up its deserted streets, with feelings that increased their doubts as to the issue of their own march to a country which they looked upon as the author of all this ruin.

Nor could the citizens themselves greatly gainsay the truth of this view of their situation. Since the lively era of the long visit to their city of the last of the Stuart line that ever sat on the throne of the kingdoms, namely, James, Duke of York, then high commissioner of the Scottish parliament, afterwards James the Second of England, but still called the Seventh of Scotland, who, with his

family and retinue, in 1682, left the royal palace of Holyrood and the kingdom for ever, Edinburgh had been gradually falling into decay. William of Orange was no friend to Scotland; and the union which took place in the succeeding reign absorbed the whole of the active Scottish nobility within the bosom of the great wen of England; leaving the once gay and wealthy Cannongate of the Scottish metropolis a series of gloomy and deserted ruins. Until the final settlement of the Hanoverian dynasty paved the way for those improvements which have since rendered Edinburgh what it is, the city remained dull and neglected, even by its own natives; commerce there was none; and law was not, in those days, so profitable a pursuit as it has been of late years. A traveller from the south, except to report the loftiness of its houses, or sneer at the ill flavour of its streets, scarcely ever was seen to enter its deserted hostelry; and so many causes conspired to aid its poverty and its gloom, that the emphatic expression of "the dark age of Edinburgh," has, by late writers, been adopted* to designate that unfortunate period.

Though the crowds that hailed the Black Watch, as the regiment marched through the Cannongate up to the castle hill, were not so great on this occasion as they were many years afterwards, when the fame of the forty-second Highlanders had reached the remotest corners of Europe; and when, on returning to their native country, and passing up this same street, the pipers and band, as General Stewart relates, could not play for want of room—still, such an event as the quartering of so noble a band of mountaineers within their walls, was almost as great a relief to the dull monotony of the neglected city, as was the well known visit of Prince Charles and his men, when on his march to the south two years afterwards. Long before the Highlanders got in by the Cannongate port, the whole town was in a bustle of expectant excitement; and as soon as the first scream of the bagpipes was heard towards the High Street, every dowager remnant of the old nobility, whom prejudice or penury yet confined, in antiquated state, within some upper flat of the lofty houses, lifted her window and shot out her frizzled head to look at the martial array. Here they sat, as the brave Highland Watch marched through, carefully observing every youthful sunburnt face that passed beneath, with all a woman's partiality for a red-coat, and all their returning national pride, that "the auld country could even still produce so gallant a company."

* Chalmers' Traditions, &c.

"There's pith in us yet, and power, too, Lady Comneathan," said a Jacobite dowager, of antique quality, speaking to her neighbour, whose frizzled head was thrust out at the corresponding window.

"Ay, we're no just come to naught, yet, although we hae gaen the broidery cloak aff our backs that we ance wore so proudly, and the vera stools we sat upon, to thae pursy Englishers; else, we couldna gather sic a sample of our ain lads aff the hills. My sooth! when German Geordy sees thae cheilda, I think he'll may be ken whether Scotland and her ancient puissance, and her ancient families, too, Lady Comneathan, are to be considered nae better than auld shards, to be haurled like a broken pan at the tail o' her ain fat nobility."

"Ye may say that, Lady Kailcrawdy," responded her equally discontented neighbour of the fifth flat. "It's puir days for Scotland when her vera Highlandmen, instead of being visited by her lawful king, as our Charlies and Jamies used to do in my young days, maun gae up to London to make an exhibition o' themselves to this interloping Hanoverian, and to hae the English rabble cutting their jokes upon their skirling pipers and their bare houghs, puir fellows. Bat mair than that, my lady. It's no for naething that the gled whistles, or that that booing Whig, Macculum-More of Argyle, or whaever else, has fleeced thae lads out o' their country, to please the English folk, and get a claught to himsel. Ye ken how hard this second George is pressed for men to help out his foolish German wars, and his Maria Theresa, and his Hanoverian hobbies. What should hinder this to be naething but a decoy, to get thae puir chields slapped aff to the seat o' war, for nae other end but to be buried in the trenches of Bergen-ap-Zoom, or such other oonnamable places! I just wish the braw lads were safe back again."

The nod of assent, and pathetic response, with which this suspicion was received, was not confined to Lady Kailcrawdy, or the other far seen gossips of the upper flats of the Cannongate of Edinburgh; for the same sentiments were broadly reciprocated by men, who were neither deficient in attachment to the Protestant dynasty, nor yet in information regarding the real state of things in England. However, partaking the same sentiments of pride in the regiment, and even friendship for many of its members, as individuals, when the citizens observed, in the course of the evening, the orderly behaviour of the men, as well as their simple hilarity in the hearty enjoyment of Lowland good cheer, they

both wished and hoped the best; and the evening was spent in such social intermixture between mountaineer and Lowlandmen, as tended greatly to dissipate mutual prejudices. The women, in particular, made no secret of their admiration of "the Highland lads," and when the early drum of the following day called them from the comfortable chaff beds of the Lowlands, and assembled their long line on the castle-hill of Edinburgh; when the pipes began to play them forth from the town, and the parting cheer of their partial countrymen, as they passed, to disturb somewhat pleasantly the silence of the morning; the regret that was already felt by many a simple heart, showed that Scotsmen, whatever feelings may be imputed to them, have a mutual enjoyment in the emotions of sentiment, and the hearty warmth of friendly nationality.

Thus our Highlandmen travelled on, and soon passing through the barrier town of Berwick, upon whose massy walls and frowning castle many of the officers looked with feelings which need not here be dwelt upon, the regiment at length found itself, for the first time, upon English ground.

"Ea! loosh but this southland country 'll be a braw place, after a', Archie," said Hamish, the piper, to his neighbour, as they surveyed, with wonder, the level plains of thick grass and corn that successively came in their view; for the prolific month of June had now invested England with all its richness. "It's just the carse of Gowrie," continued the man of wind, "ayont the carse o' Strathmore, and the next carse o' Strathairn ayont that, ever and aye. Ooch! it's nae wonder, John Englishman 'll hae plenty o' shilling to the pouch, and snuff to the nose; forbye the crowdies and the brochans, till her waeme's like to brust."

"Och, ay—it's a braw country—side enough—hunk!" said the other, throwing his eye athwart the green plain, with an envious grunt. "But look at her peoples wi' te timmir brogue on her feet, an' te bit round cogie on her head. An' och but she's a purfy creature," he added, with a contemptuous glance at the gaping and well-fed peasants, who stopped their work to gaze at them from every hedge as they passed; "an' has a chowler at her jaw like a Lowland baillie. Wow, but she maun be stech'd sair wi' te meat an' te drink, when she waggles in her walks like te skipper o' Dornock, and hauls her legs after her like an auld mare wi' te spavins."

"An' has a braw sark to her back, but hasna te havins to put it anoth te breekam," answered the other, observing,

with astorishment, and no lack of national prejudice, the peculiar dress of the peasants; that is, their linen worn over their other garments. "But some o' them," he added, "are big chields enough, if ta could gang him lane better than a dog on its hind legs, or handle a claymore like a Christian."

But these prejudices began to wear off, as the Highland-men experienced the clumsy good-nature of the villagers, and especially when they found that, instead of being regarded by the English with a corresponding prejudice, as half-naked savages, wearing nothing but a short petticoat like a woman, feeding on oats like a horse, and sleeping on snow like a Laplander, as they had heard, not without truth, was the opinion held of them by the common people of the south—they were treated with kindness, and even, in many instances, looked upon with perfect admiration. If, however, in the many late accounts of the famous events of the forty-five, we learn much of the astonishment excited in the country towns of England, as far only as Newcastle, by the Highland army who followed the chevalier two years afterwards, we may conceive the wonder with which this prior and better-appointed body was gazed at by the peasantry all the way to the metropolis. The dissipation of the prejudices just alluded to, however, by the actual sight of the men, formed the chief foundation of the surprise and admiration with which the Black Watch was regarded; during the whole of this march; when, instead of mountain savages, hardly admissible among a community of men, as their own floating babble had represented the Highlanders, the English provincials saw a squadron of infantry such as Europe could hardly parallel, dressed in the martial and picturesque "garb of old Gaul," so celebrated in a song of which one of themselves was the author, and the whole behaving with a docile politeness which left the peasantry of the south far behind, we need be at no loss to account for the dread of the latter being changed into admiration, and their national jealousy into kindness and emulative civility. At length, far from fatigued with a march on foot of five hundred miles, over roads by no means such as they are in our day, the outer indications of London itself at length came into view; and the simple men thought only of seeing the king, who had sent for them, with nothing but kindness and compliments, and was now doubtless waiting for their arrival in his city, with anxious impatience, thinking, "to be surely," of them and their long march, at least as much as they were thinking of him.

It is the misfortune of Scotsmen, particularly the High-

landers—at least until long training in the ways of the civilized world may root out that which is part of their nature—that they always look upon the motives of those with whom they have to do, as considerably tinged with *sentiment*, or biased either by friendship or enmity. Thus, in reference either to amity or offence, *feeling* being much the foundation of their own actions, they naturally judge of others by themselves; and be they, perhaps, a calculating people, they undoubtedly *calculate* constantly, more or less, upon the great impulses of human nature. The general body of the Black Watch, then, having been persuaded into trusting loyalty to the new dynasty, by a species of *sentiment*, well calculated to move men of simple apprehensions; and that sentiment having been warmed as well as verified, by an invitation from “the gude man that sat in Charlie’s chair,” for them to come up to London, that king and servant might see each other; this begun friendship and loyalty seemed to the latter to be farther cemented and consolidated, by the soldier having opportunity of showing his skill and address in the handling of his peculiar weapon, and the king his favour to men, who, from various causes, thought they were entitled to think much higher of themselves than of the mercenary regiments of his Majesty’s ordinary service.

Indulging these feelings, so flattering to apprehensions such as theirs, the Highlanders entered with joy the outer suburbs of the great city of London. The fame of their appearance having gone before, and the season being favourable, crowds came out to meet them; and the wonder excited in the prejudiced metropolitan, at the unheard-of enormity of the Gaelic philebeg, was only equalled here also, by their surprise that it should look so well on a soldier, and their admiration of the general effect of the peculiar costume upon a large body of men.

Great astonishment was excited in the Londoners, as the bagpipe screamed for the first time in the then pleasant parks of Hornsey. The men of the Watch, however, received their first damper to their fresh feelings, upon finding themselves not permitted to enter the city in a body: The regiment halted just under Highgate Hill, and the men were distributed into quarters throughout the ancient villages of Crouch End, Stroud Green, Muswell Hill, and other parts of that suspicious and straggling suburb, lying between it and Aldersgate, which in those days of imperfect police, was well known to give much trouble to the indulgent authorities of Middlesex.

CHAPTER XXV.

O England, attend, while thy fate I deplore,
 Rehearsing the schemes and the conduct of power;
 And since only of those who have power I sing,
 I am sure none can think that I hint at the king.

Lord Henry, 1742.

HERETO the events of our story have obliged us to glance occasionally at the circumstances of the times, at least as viewed by the *dramatis personæ* with which we have had to do. But these personages, being chiefly Jacobites, in an age when every man in England, as well as Scotland, spoke in the exaggerated language of faction, it may not be amiss to refresh the reader's recollection by a few particulars of the history of a period, unusually important as preparatory to after events, yet, from various causes, subject in our day to unusual neglect.

The men who were chiefly instrumental in expelling the House of Stuart, and seating William on the throne of England, were, upon the whole, a firm and a wise set of patriots. Though the national unanimity, so remarkable in all parties, which brought about that measure, continued with little diminution for several generations, even extending, by the aid of events fortunate for the nation, to the introduction of the House of Hanover, and the final settlement of the Protestant succession; yet was not all this good obtained without an alloy of evil, which it is impossible the nation can easily either forget or repair.

This evil, under the effects of which England indeed at present groans, has unquestionably consisted, chiefly, in the gradual corruption of her public men, and the extensive swallowing up of patriotic principle, in views of selfishness and family aggrandizement, which was, perhaps, at its height in the days of which we write, and has paved the way for so remarkable a waste, since, of the resources of a nation,

whose internal energies have actually been such as, perhaps, to put all antiquity to shame. It is this fact, perhaps, making the annals of England, during the reigns of the two first Georges little else than the history of a disputing and changing legislature, efficient in nothing but its systematic corruption, and the power it thus obtained over a murmuring people, which causes this portion of our history to excite so little interest, and consequently to be so little known to the great mass of society in our own day. Even Marlborough's wars, in Queen Anne's time, partaking, as they did, of the same irrational character and abortive results, as the balance-of-power disputes and Hanoverian campaigns of the second George's times—even they now excite but little interest, to relieve the languor attending the details of eternal struggles for power and place at home, painful repetitions of complaints and representations, much talent and some patriotism, almost entirely wasted against the power of numbers and of money. The only event that really stands out in these *transitive* times, upon which the mind dwells with admiration or with melancholy, is the unhappy rebellion of the forty-five, which was the partial explosion of the feelings of the period, at least so far as Scotland was concerned, and whose characteristics as well as consequences are, therefore, studied and known.

But, blank as this period is in public interest, nevertheless, from the greater license of manners abounding among all classes at the time, the greater simplicity of feeling, and consequent boldness of character, the greater ignorance generally, and particularly of politics; and, in short, the greater capacity of the people for bearing oppression or misrule, notwithstanding the disposition to tumult which so frequently showed itself in occurrences of private history and biographical romance; that period was in many respects rich in facts, compared with the present times, much as we have advanced since in general moral and political improvement. It is the belief that these facts have not been altogether exhausted, notwithstanding the high talent that has been occupied in ransacking them, as well as that much remains to be instructively illustrated in the manners and opinions of a period so near to our own, that has caused us to adventure upon this present history. In doing so, we need hardly remark to the intelligent reader, that the strong language used by each party at the period, will be found fully to justify the expressions we have put into the mouths of those who have occasion to speak upon the political topics of their days, as well as those bitter imputations on the Ha-

nover dynasty of our monarchs, which, however natural and common with the old Jacobite party, are found so nobly falsified in our own more auspicious days.

But to return to our brief sketch of events, which agitated the public mind in England about the period of our story.

Ever since the accession of the House of Hanover, the care and protection of that small portion of the German empire, naturally, however, the favourite of the king, had been a terrible incumbrance on the foreign policy of England, by involving her in all the petty intrigues of the northern states, and inveigling her in a constant labyrinth of contentious diplomacy and continental disputes. This was peculiarly the case at the accession of George the Second, but it is no small praise to Sir Robert Walpole, that, whatever might have been the corruption which he systematically introduced into the British legislation, and from whatever motives he in general acted, in this instance he had the address to weather his king through all the intricacies of continental policy; and, both in the previous and the present reign, to keep England out of war for a great many years. Less sagacious, however, after all, than some of his successors of later times, he did not perceive that when Englishmen have money to pay for war they delight to fight, and that a war minister is always more extensively popular than one who should even have the patriotism to relieve the people by slow and sure measures of policy—he employed the large revenues at his command in a manner well known, besides the support and augmentation of a standing army, then the subject of constant parliamentary bickerings until the humbled state of the nation, and the crippled state of her trade, from the insults in particular of Spain, at sea, became the means of raising that clamour against him, which accelerated his downfall, little more than a year previous to the period we are speaking of.

Into the causes which might have gone far to oblige this celebrated statesman to act as he did, we cannot, of course, now enter. But the grand political principle, then much in vogue, of maintaining the balance of power in Europe—the pride of England to be umpire and redresser of the grievances of potentates—together with the partialities and continental connexions of the king, all led to that constant intermeddling with the plans of foreign powers, and that system of subsidizing poor governments, which have cost England so much eloquence, as well as industry, to keep up, and of which we now so severely feel the effects. Neither can we enter into the complicated arguments by which the pay-

ment of Hanoverian and Hessian mercenaries, for fighting their own battles, or marching for the defence of the balance of power, were advocated by the eloquent ministry of that day; but this we know, that eloquence and talent had enough to do to make these, and a large standing army at home (to keep the Jacobites and political critics in check) hang well together; and the speakers and writers have not gained much grace and favour by it all, in the deliberate judgment of posterity.

But the merchants of London having first insisted on a war with Spain—the death of the then Emperor of Germany bringing forward the celebrated Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary, his daughter, against the not less celebrated Frederick of Prussia; another war was of course the consequence, into which England's foreign diplomacy, as well as her generous pity for the difficulties of a young queen, soon engaged her on the continent. The Netherlands were, as usual, the scene of the assembling of the armies, and here, Hanoverians, Hessians, and English, on the part of King George, and other armies on the part of their respective powers, had for some time been gathered together for the war, and began to think of moving towards the Rhine, soon after the time the Black Watch were ordered to meet his majesty in London.

As to the condition of Scotland all this while, or the sentiments of her people upon these transactions, they were considered of little consequence to a government which had something else to do than to pay attention to the murmurings of a poor nation, which had lost all of which it was once proud, and whose needy or greedy nobility, persuaded or overawed by the eloquence or craft of one or two prominent men of her own nation, and influenced, no doubt, by more substantial reasons, were as subservient as the English ministry could wish. This ministry, indeed, as the reader knows, partaking much of the degraded spirit then so infectious, now practised or defended the policy, which in Walpole's hands they had formerly opposed and denounced. Managing, however, with his usual address, to divide the party whose power had caused his downfall, inquiries into the conduct of that celebrated man were parried by his policy, or stifled by the power of himself and his adherents; and thus the stream of corruption, which had been only broken into bubbles, but by no means materially altered by recent changes, has, with a few hard-won improvements, continued to flow regularly until the present day.

It does not belong to a performance of such slight pretensions as this, however, to attempt doing any thing like justice to either of the great parties of that day, or to the causes and tendency of the policy adopted, which, in the imperfect histories remaining to us of the period, have never yet been fairly or philosophically developed. As little would it be suitable for us here to enter upon the great question of human nature, upon which is founded, of course, all the complex phenomena of the (partly inevitable) corruptions of governments. But it is thus that the lives and fortunes of unnoticed individuals are constantly affected, and it is with obscure persons, and private feelings and fates, that we have at present chiefly to do.

Before, however, finishing this brief summary, a few remarks more upon the state of sentiment then existing between Englishmen and Scotsmen, happily so different from what it is in our own day, may be necessary to the understanding of that part of our story which is yet to come.

From the days of the haughty Edward and Bannockburn, until the time we speak of, England had always stood towards Scotland, as well as Ireland, in much the same relation as the rich and powerful man, not over-burdened with generosity, does to the proud-spirited and the valorous, yet poor man; and in her treatment of Scotland, of late times, had made this spirit peculiarly observable and galling. Not to speak of the horrors of Glencoe, and the subsequent headings, and hangings, and confiscations, which might be partly merited from the overt acts of rebellion; the jealousy and opposition of England, which was the main cause of the national disaster of Darien, sank deep into the minds of Scotsmen; and followed, as it was, by the degrading terms of the Union, and the vengeful insolence with which the English legislature sought to punish the provost and magistrates of her ancient city of Edinburgh, upon the occasion of the popular execution of Porteus, made the nation see what she had to expect from the spirit of her ancient, but purse-proud enemy, and roused feelings which a century has yet scarcely allayed. While, then, the rich man's disregard of the feelings of the powerless was remarkably illustrated by the conduct of the English ministry towards Scotland, in these transactions; those feelings were made more keen on the part of the latter, by the fact, that the selfish corruption of the legislature in the south was strongly contrasted in the better part of the community in the north, by that quaint simplicity of manners and character,

which is the foundation of so many virtues, and that chivalry of feeling, then so strong on the hills, which gives a loftiness of sentiment, that holds deceit and immorality in double scorn, and communicates an elevation to the best impulses of human nature, which often amounts to the purest romance.

That this was the case, at least with the greater proportion of the high-minded mountaineers of the Black Watch, may perhaps be proved by the simple, yet well-founded events of our tale.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Let them enter:

They are the faction, 'O conspiracy!
Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
When evils are most free? O, then, by day,
Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough?

SHAKESPEARE.

TRANSFERRING our scene back, in point of time, and still farther north in point of locality, namely, into the very heart of the mountains of Angus, we find two travellers mounted on Highland shelties, and with a single attendant, in the shape of a guide, wending slowly down the heathy side of one of the mountains. It was already sundown. The scene around was singularly wild and dreary in its secluded and sombre sterility, and the narrow glen into which our travellers were descending, for some time deprived of the light of day, lay a dark and unpromising gulf beneath them.

"Are we near the spot yet, Donald?" said Glenmore to the gilly; "conscience, but this is an ugly place for any such gathering."

"It'll joost be a twa or a three bow-shot ayont ta craig wi' ta black face, her honour," said the man. "We'll joost be there in the cracking o' her honour's thumb."

"There's wondrous few objects in this dismal glen with other than black faces," said the second equestrian, namely, our hero himself. "Faith, I think the *seidar dearag* would have little chance in such a contankerous pass as this."

"I like the place well," said the chief, looking on the black wilds and deep ravine below, with the sort of complacency which a Highlander always regards the misty sterility of his blue hills; "the choice of such a spot for the meeting of the chiefs, shows caution at least; a quality, which if properly seconded, may save these misguided men from farther rashness; and in this respect, Hector, I look

upon you, young as you are, as, perhaps, being of some use to us."

Descending with caution a steep pass, our travellers found themselves, at length, in a level hollow; but it was by this time so dark, that they could not tell whether the bottom of the glen contained a running stream, as usual, or whether they had still farther to descend.

"Wha be there?" said the rough voice of a man, challenging them from a recess in the rock almost at their side, as they issued out of the gorge.

"Stuarts," was the ready answer.

"Keep close at the root o' the rock," said the man, "and turn to the left when ye see a peep o' red low."

Our travellers did as they were desired, and a streak of red light soon appearing to their left, as if through a loop-hole, they made for it, and repeating the same pass-word, were admitted by a low but wide Gothic arch into a dark passage of massy building, that seemed partly in ruins. Mounting a few steps under the guidance of the man whom they met at the door, they were admitted into a small chamber, at the entrance of which they were again met by two stout fellows with large Lochaber axes in their hands, whose office it was to examine them by the light of a blazing torch, that flamed in the wind which blew through the loop-hole, or smoked up the dark walls of the chamber.

"And who is this youngster, Glenmore?" said one of them, plucking the torch from the wall, that he might have a better look of our hero.

"He is a true man, and no traitor," said the chief. "I will be answerable for him."

"If he is a true man, he has a name, the which, as you know, Glenmore, it is our duty to be apprized of."

"Hector Monro is his name, since you will not accept of my word of surety."

"We refuse not your surety, sir; but that is a Whig name. Is he of the Monros of —, or of —, or may be, he is of the —."

"I cannot just answer you—but he is a true man, and I am his bond."

"Methinks, Glenmore, he should have a father, as most of us have—and no disparagement to you;" and the fellow with a scrutinizing sneer, looked first at the chief and then at the youth.

"Suppose his father and mother should be dead, and he left under my care, since you hold all this questioning."

"You will excuse us, Glenmore," rejoined the moun-

taineer, "but our duty is sworn to, and the Whigs are more crafty than a generous chief may think of." With this speech he opened the massy oaken door at his back, and shutting it in their faces, left them under the care of the other battle-axe sentinels.

"So I am not to be admitted to partake even in the honour of committing treason, or in the risking of my life with others, from this cursed state of fatherless uncertainty!" whispered Hector to his friend, with a bitter expression. "Had I known this, Glenmore, I should never——"

"Hush and be patient;—but here is the scrutinizer again."

"You may enter, gentlemen," said the man, as he returned; and throwing open the oaken door, Hector was shown a sight he was hardly prepared for.

Round a large square apartment, so lofty that when he looked up he could see the stars twinkling in the darkened sky, our hero perceived above twenty men, whose tall or athletic figures and high bearing, as well as the quality of their costumes, showed their station and authority as chieftains of the hills. Disdaining to comply with the detested disarming act, each man appeared with black belt and pistols, upon the silver mounting of which, as well as of the dirk at their sides, and their weather-worn but haughty countenances, the light of the wood fire that blazed at one end of the apartment, shone in contrast with the black naked walls of the apartment, with a picturesque if not imposing effect. A single stone, rudely carved, stood near the end where the fire blazed. This, though probably once the altar, now served the purpose of a table, for on it was placed a silver inkhorn of antique workmanship, a few pens, a lump of green wax, and a small scrap of parchment. Beside this pedestal, and on another stone, sat a grave-looking elderly man, who seemed already appointed to the office of secretary. Among those who saluted Glenmore on his entrance, Hector noticed several of the men, who had dined at Glenmore castle on the first day of his arrival.

The proceedings were opened by a tall dignified personage, who, standing near the stone table, seemed to act as president, by informing those present of the purpose for which they were met; namely, to deliberate upon the information then in their hands, as to the practicability of freeing Scotland from English oppression and foreign tyranny; (as he was pleased to express it,) and of placing their rightful sovereign, his Majesty James the Third, again upon the throne of these realms. Upon this subject, he read to

them several letters from his Majesty himself, then in France, the noble chevalier his son, and numerous other puissant personages, both in England and the low country of Scotland, who were ready to join them with hand and fortune, in any measures which would seem rationally to promise success in so glorious an enterprise.

Hector observed, that during this speech, several of the faces of those present remained perfectly grave, and contrasted strangely with the enthusiasm so natural to mountaineers, which most, however, exhibited at its conclusion. Several other chieftains, following the president, spoke with brief and even poetical energy upon the subject; and in their calculations of numbers whom they expected to join them, should the king or his son land in Scotland, they spoke with the vagueness inflated into brilliant hopes, so usual with the projectors of such enterprises. The real question at present was, however, whether they should advise James, or his son, or the King of France, to whom the fugitive monarch looked for considerable succours, that the present was the time for making the attempt; and upon this part of the subject, there was, as might have been expected, considerable division of opinion. This was the opportunity for Glenmore, who now stood forth to deliver his sentiments.

He said that no man present was more sensible than himself, either of the evils under which Scotland at present groaned, or of the injustice done to their unfortunate, but lawful, king. "In this world," he observed, "I need hardly remind you, there is nothing whatever as we wish it, and little, indeed, that men have it in *their power* to alter for the better, even if they were agreed as to what was really desirable. It is therefore"—thus in substance continued the chief—"our wisdom often to submit to things as we find them,—at least until we perceive a clear path before us, and have tangible means of changing them to our wishes." This, on the subject upon which they had met, he contended was not yet the case; and showed, that any rashness upon a point of such importance, would plunge the country into a civil war, to the ruin of the whole of them, as well as their royal master himself. And he endeavoured to divert the chiefs from any farther proceedings, by moving, that no answer whatever should be given to the court of St. Germain, until farther and more satisfactory information was obtained. He concluded by proposing, that a special messenger be sent to London, to wait upon that zealous friend of King James,—namely, the dowager Duchess of

Buckingham, who, living in the very heart of the court, and intimate with all the leading persons who were favourable to the same cause, could give them thorough information as to what they ought rationally to hope for in the southern part of the kingdom.

Though sufficiently divided in opinion in general, this proposal met with the approbation of every man present of any coolness of thinking. The difficulty, however, was, where to get a messenger of sufficient intelligence to perform a mission which they did not think proper to trust to pen and parchment—who should not, at the same time, be liable to be arrested, through the watchful jealousy of the Whigs of the government. This was the very point to which Glenmore was desirous they should come; and now, bringing forward Hector, he eulogized him, as, notwithstanding his youth, fully competent to the important trust; and indeed, in respect of his knowledge of Lowland manners and of the English language, as well as for his pleasing exterior and address, peculiarly well fitted for it.

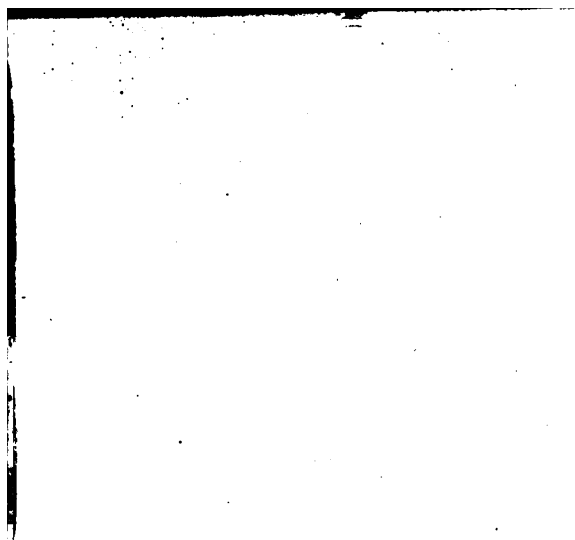
Nothing, however, but the known principles, wisdom, and coolness of Glenmore, could have made a proposition of this kind be listened to for a moment, in respect to one so young as Hector; nor did it eventually pass without a repetition of those inquiries, regarding the youth's name and parentage, which always caused deep mortification to his feelings.

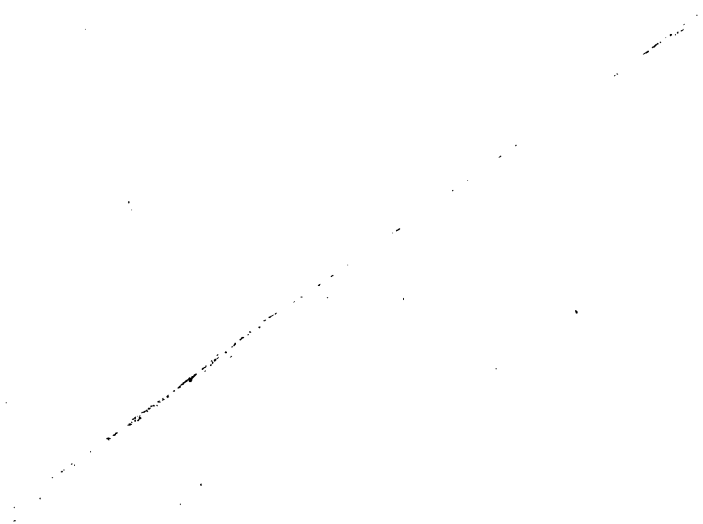
Honourable as such a mission might be supposed to one in Hector's circumstances, he did not accept of it without a reluctance which was only overcome by the solemn assurances of Glenmore, that in executing it, he was by no means committed to the cause; and that, in fact, by the opportunity it would give him of obtaining unprejudiced information upon an important point, he might, by a judicious use of the knowledge he would gain, become the means of averting almost a national calamity. "In truth," said the chief to him, aside, "if I may judge from the letters I have seen from London, this descendant of the Stuarts, whom you are requested to wait upon, is nothing but a silly, vain, and intriguing old woman, whose designs, I shrewdly suspect, are, by her own imprudence, much about as well known to her enemies, as they are to us here on the hills; and if that be true, some of our heads are not overly secure on our shoulders. But you will see, as to this, with your own eyes; and at all events, this journey will give you opportunity of seeing the great city of the

south, with all expenses paid; and as you are yet but a youth, you know not what may come of it."

Money having been furnished for Hector's expenses before he left the meeting, and it having been arranged that he was to travel as he was to Edinburgh, and then get equipped with a fashionable dress of broad cloth, a periwig, and sword, after the first fashion of an English gentleman; taking with him Donald M'Evan as his servant, in a dress befitting his new station, they both prepared for their long journey. The only document he received from the chiefs, in verification of his mission, was a small, circular piece of parchment, on the centre of which was imprinted a rude figure of the Scotch lion; and at its four corners were superscribed sundry cabalistic looking letters, of which the president, who gave him his instructions, said her grace of Buckingham would well understand the meaning.

As to his instructions, these consisted chiefly of certain questions, which he was to put in the most diplomatic manner possible, to her grace; but concerning the rest, he was in general told to have open ears and eyes, and a shut mouth, particularly as to the names of any of those whom he happened to know at the meeting. All this being arranged, Hector and his friend were conducted from the meeting in the same secret manner in which they had entered it; and on the following day, the former and Donald were already many miles on their journey towards the Lowlands.





[illegible]

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in financial matters. The text outlines various methods for organizing and storing data, including digital databases and physical filing systems. It also mentions the need for regular audits and reviews to ensure the integrity of the information.

2. The second section focuses on the role of communication in the organization. It highlights the importance of clear and concise communication channels, both internally and externally. The text suggests implementing regular meetings and reports to keep all stakeholders informed and engaged. It also discusses the benefits of using technology to facilitate communication, such as email and instant messaging, while cautioning against over-reliance on digital tools.

3. The third part of the document addresses the issue of resource management. It stresses the need to allocate resources effectively and efficiently, ensuring that all projects and initiatives have the necessary support. The text provides guidelines for budgeting and financial planning, as well as strategies for managing human resources. It also touches upon the importance of maintaining a healthy work environment and promoting employee well-being.

4. The final section discusses the overall goals and objectives of the organization. It outlines the long-term vision and mission statement, and how these should guide all decision-making and actions. The text encourages a focus on continuous improvement and innovation, and provides examples of successful strategies and practices. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving the organization's goals.

